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ILLUSTRATOR

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No.9

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DESIGNED TO HELP

- Top designers join forces to raise money for the tsunami appeal. Read the full story on page 08

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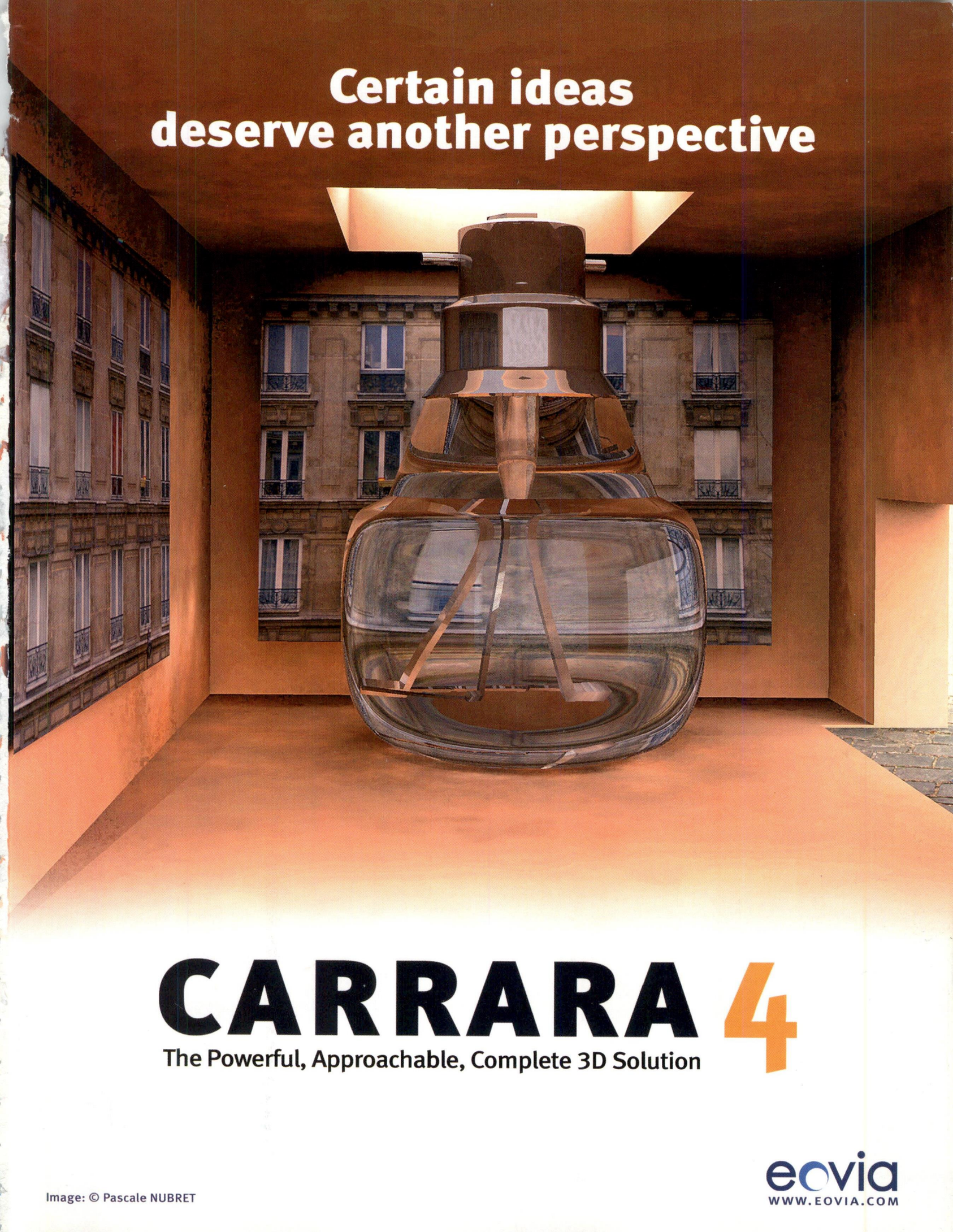

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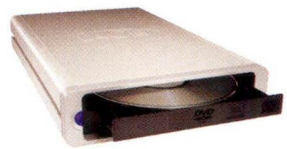

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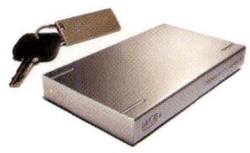

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Welcome

Have you noticed that twins always seem to follow a pattern? There's one that tends to be more dominant and chatty, effortlessly commanding the full attention of a room. Then there's the other twin who seems to hang back in the shadows and be a little on the awkward side. Far from displaying the dazzling qualities of the more extrovert twin, this one is easily overlooked and may even be a touch unsettling.

Now, it's possible that we've lost our minds, but this seems to be a good analogy for Adobe's Photoshop and Illustrator programs. On the one hand you have the *tour de force* that is Photoshop – everyone's heard of it, most people have a basic understanding of it and very few people have a bad word to say about it. Then there's Illustrator, with its slightly scary palettes and its different way of working.

On using the program for the first time, you don't notice the vast potential it offers – what you notice is that anything you draw has funny point marks everywhere and these seem to go into a spasm if you try to make the smallest of changes. But as everyone reading this magazine probably knows, Illustrator has a huge amount to offer the creative digital artist, and by just putting in a bit of effort to learn how it works, you'll soon appreciate it for the highly intuitive program that it is.

Don't believe us? Just flick through this magazine. There are a huge range of styles on display – from photo-realistic illustrations (p14), to 3D-esque models (p32), right through to a disco-crazed cartoon simian (p74). It's all been created in Illustrator and we show you exactly how. Plus, with Illustrator CS's extra Type functions, you can begin to use typography in your designs like never before. See page 46 for more.

So as you can see, Illustrator is far from being a wilting wallflower. It may hang back while its more popular sibling gets all the attention, but it will shine like a star when given the chance.

Jo Cole, Editor
pixie@paragon.co.uk

YOUR EXPERT GUIDES

Even the toughest Illustrator task melts into submission at the hands of these fine people...

I Love Dust

We called upon the design genius that is I Love Dust to come up with our cover this issue. See how it was done by turning to page 14 and have a go at creating it yourself. Also find out how the company spearheaded the Designed to Help project on p8.

Charlene Chua Hui Ling

Charlene is a freelance illustrator and has produced work for a number of magazines including *FHM* in Singapore. Turn to page 42 where she shows you how to bring an illustration to life through cunning – but simple – use of gradients.

Sam Chivers

Part of the Magictorch design company, Sam has plenty of experience when it comes to Illustrator. This issue he proves you don't need great drawing skill to create artwork – all you need is Illustrator's default shapes. See what he comes up with on p50.

Steve Pick

When he's not designing weird and wonderful games characters, Steve can be found working on his own animation project, Daisy Jones. But he still managed to find the time to create us a disco monkey! Turn to page 74 for more.

Digital CreativeArts special edition

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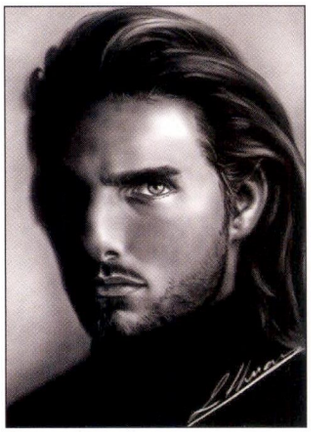

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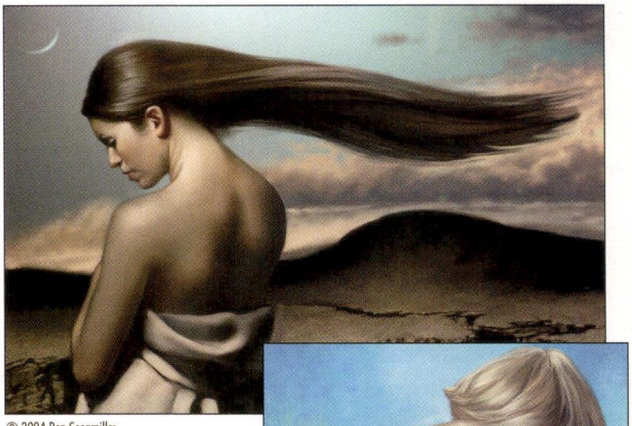

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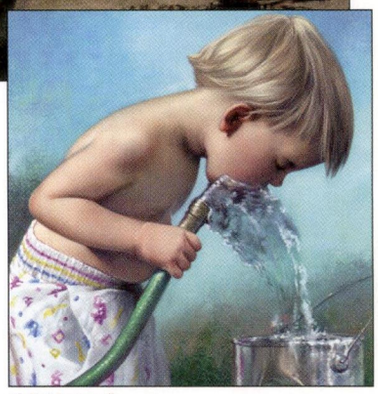

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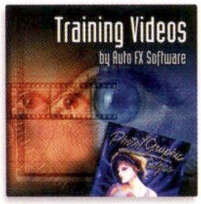

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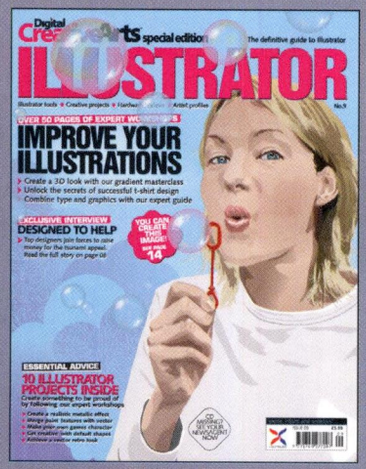
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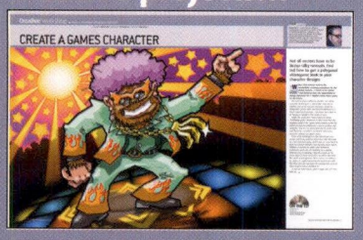

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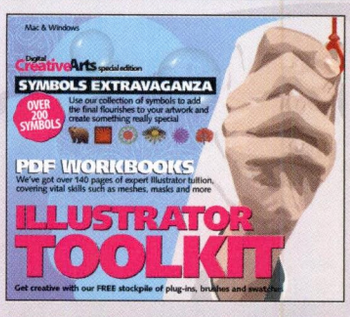
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Designed to Help

When something as catastrophic as last December's tsunami earthquake happens, it's natural to want to do something to help. We caught up with UK design agency, I Love Dust, to find out how its money-raising idea ended up involving thousands of people and many late nights

It's amazing how the smallest acorn of an idea can quickly snowball into something much bigger and often much better than the original concept. Just a few words in the right ear can reap amazing results, which is particularly good if the idea happens to be for a good cause. British design agency, I Love Dust, experienced this first hand when it decided to take an active approach in raising money for the tsunami earthquake appeal.

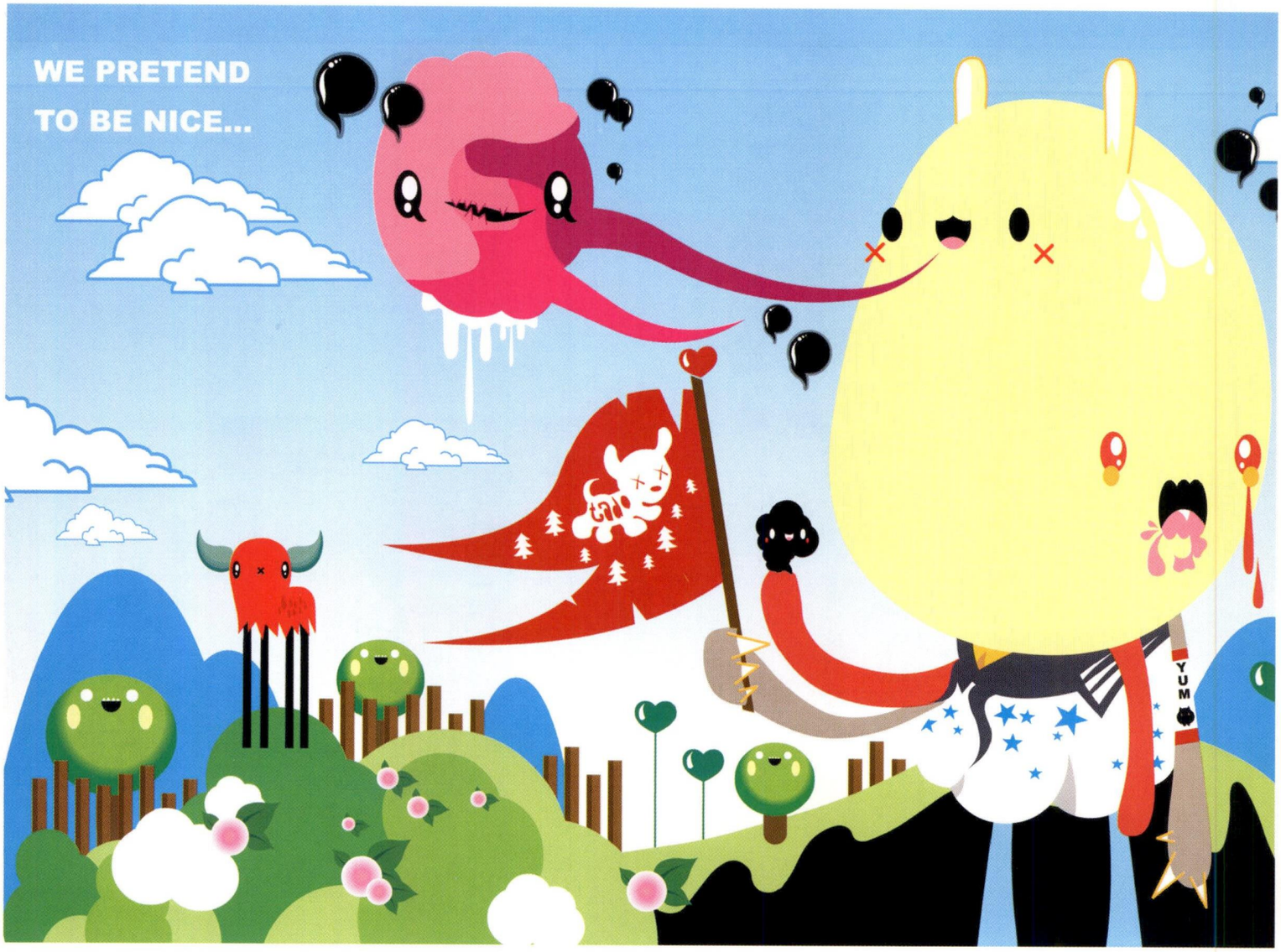
The I Love Dust group are a pretty sociable bunch, and capitalised on their standing in the design community to try and produce something pretty special. Their challenge was to come up with an idea that could be accessed by the maximum number of people to raise the maximum amount of money. The end result was a design book. But not just any old design book – *Designed to Help* features work from top designers, artists and illustrators, all of whom have donated their time for free. It's hoped that the final product, which at the time of writing looks set to be just over 300 pages long, will fly off the shelves and raise a hefty amount for the tsunami appeal.

And there's no reason to believe that it won't. We've included sample images from the book on these pages, and it's not difficult to see how the project will work on two levels – on one level you have the fundraising aspect of the title, but on another level you also have a beautiful collection of art.

So why did I Love Dust decide it wanted to do something more than just donate money? "The news reports we all watched following the tsunami disaster were inspiration enough to make us want to help raise money for the cause – it was a pretty instant reaction," they comment. "I Love Dust wanted, like many people, to think of a practical way in which we could help the relief effort. The general public had already shown a huge generosity, and at that point the government was beginning to discuss relieving debt, etc. It seemed like businesses needed to do their bit, too."

Record breaker

The public's reaction to the tsunami crisis has indeed been a generous one. On 20 January, the Guinness World Records announced that the response from the British public to the DEC Tsunami Earthquake Appeal had broken a world record. Between the hours of 6.16pm on 30 December 2004 and 6.16pm on 31 December 2004, an amazing 166,936 donations had



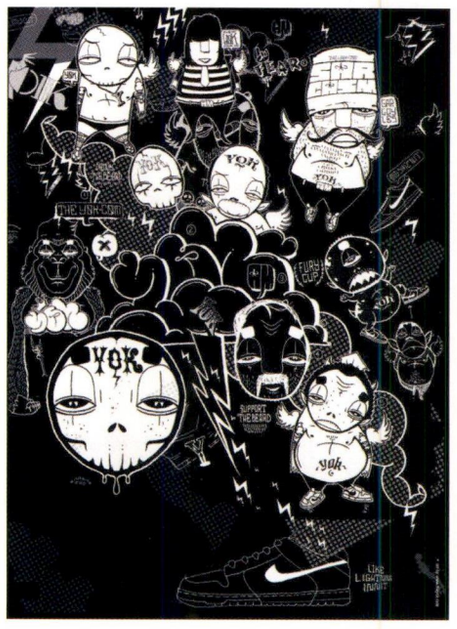
Designed to Help includes work from some of the design world's brightest stars, covering a wide range of styles

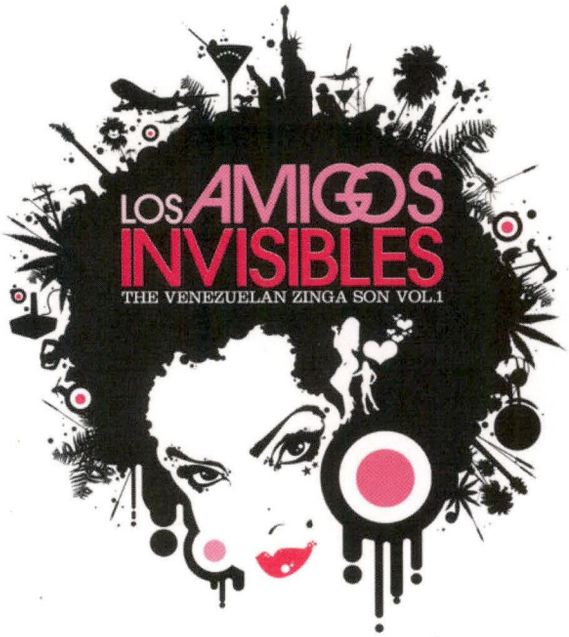
been received at the DEC Web site. The value of all these donations was £10,676,836, which is the most amount of money ever donated online in 24 hours.

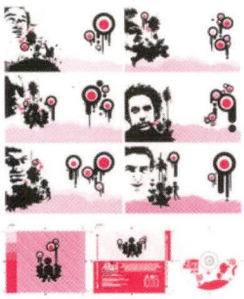
At the time of writing, the British public had donated in excess of £250 million, and over 1,200 individuals and companies have registered fundraising activities for the DEC Tsunami Earthquake Appeal. All these events are expected to raise a further £300 million that will be used to help the survivors build their lives up again. People have arranged all sorts of activities to raise money, from climbing mountains to holding black tie balls, so we wondered whether producing a book was I Love Dust's first idea, or whether there were other possibilities.

"We were pretty sure there was some potential to get the design/illustration industry pulling together for some sort of project, and a book seemed like a good start," they explain. "We began to put out the feelers to a few friends we have in the design industry, asking what they thought of the idea of a compilation book full of graphic art/design/illustration that would be sold to raise money for the tsunami appeal. We didn't envisage the work as being 'themed' to the disaster. People would just contribute work – new or recent – that they'd like to have in a book that would be sold for this cause."

The fact that the *Designed to Help* book isn't full of tsunami-themed work means there's plenty of scope for other projects. In fact, this is by no means a one-time only gesture. The I Love Dust crew and their friends are in this for the long haul, and see potential in expanding the *Designed to Help* book to raise the







Although the project is only concerned with raising money for the tsunami appeal, the decision was made to not theme the book to the event

maximum amount of money. As they explain: "From the start we thought that the 'Designed to Help' idea could apply to so much stuff – a toy designed to help, a book, a T-shirt... All these things have the potential to be a success and make a difference. Extending the project beyond a book is a real possibility. Although the tragedy is perhaps no longer the leading news story, we think everyone can appreciate the ongoing need for fundraising, and Designed to Help has plenty of scope to continue. We are definitely looking into it."

A friend in need

Once the initial idea was in place, the next step was to go about getting contributors to fill the pages. "We emailed people, rang them, banged on their doors, got them out of bed and so on. Mike and Katie at Tado were amazingly helpful at getting artists from all over, as were the Black Convoy collective and Ded Ass and Yacht associates."

I Love Dust's hard work was rewarded by a positive response from the people it approached: "Everyone's been very generous and supportive. People realised that Designed to Help was a very genuine attempt to get off our asses and do something, rather than just talk about it and not bother to take it further."

And judging by how many people signed up to help, it would seem like an awful lot of people are prepared to 'get off their asses' and do something for the appeal. Even I Love Dust were surprised at the number of people pledging their services. "Emails kept pouring in every hour and it was a very hard process to answer them one by one. People were hugely understanding and patient, though. We're not sure how many emails we received in the end, but it was in the thousands."

With this kind of response to the project, it was soon clear that some sacrifices were going to have to be made. Just keeping on top of the emails was becoming a mammoth task, and then there was the business of

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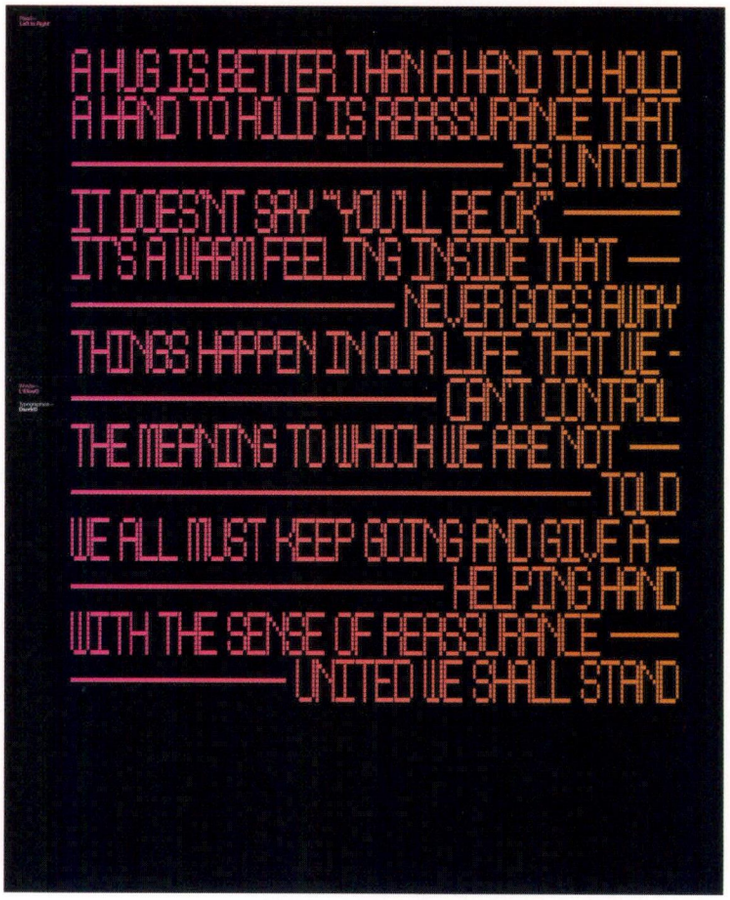
A HUG IS BETTER THAN A HAND TO HOLD
A HAND TO HOLD IS REASSURANCE THAT
IS UNTOLD
IT DOESN'T SAY "YOU'LL BE OK"
IT'S A WARM FEELING INSIDE THAT
NEVER GOES AWAY
THINGS HAPPEN IN OUR LIFE THAT WE -
CAN'T CONTROL
THE MEANING TO WHICH WE ARE NOT
TOLD
WE ALL MUST KEEP GOING AND GIVE A -
HELPING HAND
WITH THE SENSE OF REASSURANCE
UNITED WE SHALL STAND

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trying to find distributors, publishers and put together a final list of contributors to deal with. And on top of this, the I Love Dust crew still had to take care of their own design business. But the team were prepared for this, and didn't mind making a few alterations to their daily routine. "We knew that the project would take up a lot of time, and during the early days we weren't able to take on much client work," they explain. "But deadlines can always be met if you burn the midnight oil, and we were very aware that this project was worth losing sleep over. We all got addicted to coffee in the process, though!"

Sweet relief

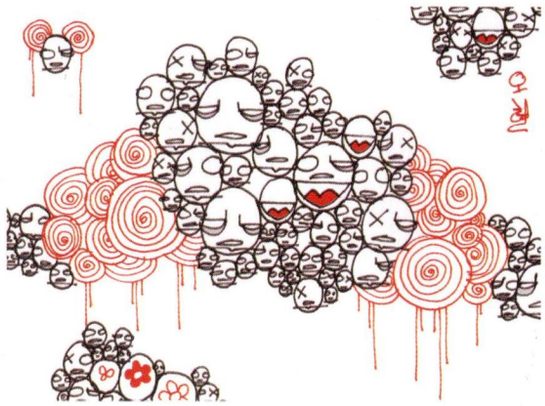
While no one minded putting in extra hours to get the job done, the project got a massive boost when a distributor and publisher was found. Die Gestalten Verlag (DVG) is a respected publisher of art books, and when it jumped on board the Designed to Help project, it really began to take things to the next level. As I Love Dust explains, 'When DVG got involved, things moved very, very quickly. The guys over there are incredible, and would work for days without sleep to collate the book. As soon as they came on board, the division of labour became a lot clearer and the chaos eased up a bit. Now there are defined roles according to each person's expertise, covering the many, many angles that are involved in this project."

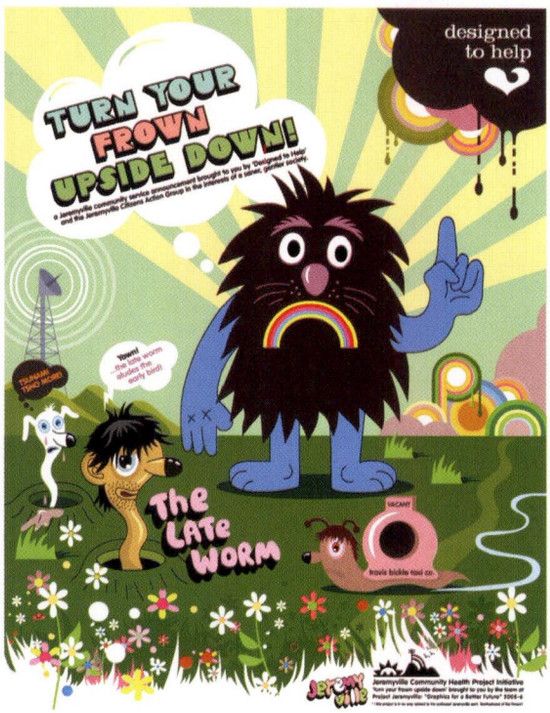
As well as obviously being beneficial to the final product, another advantage of having so many people from so many disciplines getting involved is that there is plenty of help and advice when needed. "We have been thinking on our feet with this project, as lots of it has represented new ground for us," says I Love Dust. "However, with so many people involved, there always seems to be someone to ask for advice. Since DVG got involved, we have also had their knowledge to rely on, so we haven't had any nasty shocks... touch wood (bonk bonk)!"

And there's more...

Even though the book should be about 300 pages, when you consider the volume of emails and submissions the Designed to Help project has generated, it's no surprise that there's a lot of work that didn't make it into the final product. So is this going to be used in any other way?

"We had so much work submitted that it's inevitable that some just won't get in the book, so it would be nice to think of something that could show all the work submitted," I Love Dust muse. "We're not 100 per cent sure what it would be at this stage. We've spoken to a few people such as Jeremyville and The Designer Republic about producing other items to help,





but just what they might be is still very open. At this stage we would just like to say a massive thanks to all the people who've submitted work and helped in soooo many ways. It has been a great response."

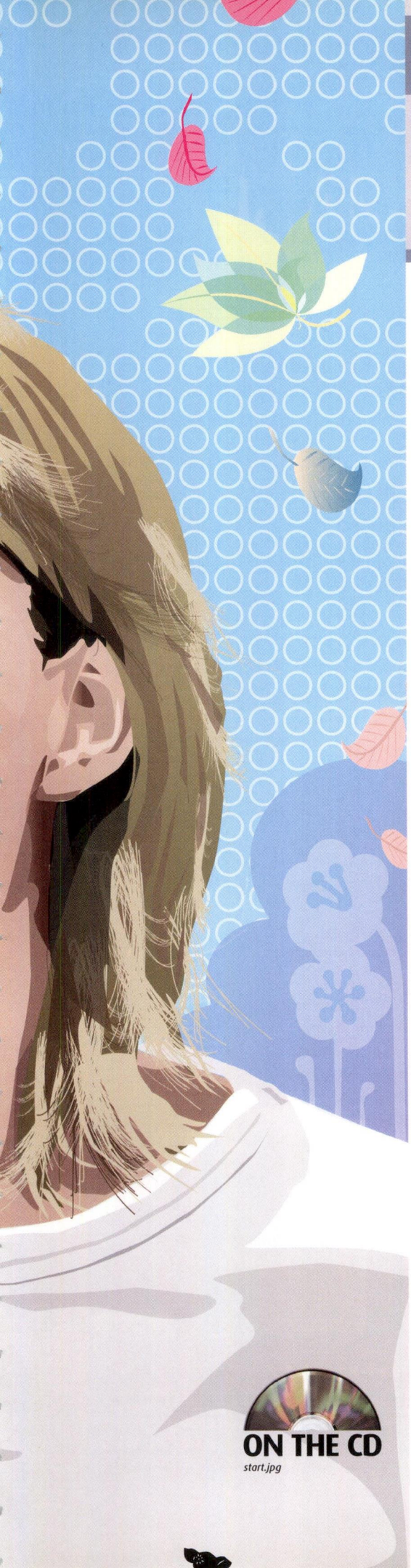
As an example of what can happen if you talk to enough people and put in the hard work, *Designed to Help* is a resounding success. But for all that hard work to be worthwhile, you need to go out and buy it! Due to go on sale in mid-March, *Designed to Help* will cost around £28. Get more information from **www.desinedtohelp.com** or **www.die-gestalten.de**.

If you want to donate money to the DEC Tsunami Earthquake Appeal, you can do so online at **www.dec.org.uk**, by phoning **0870 60 60 900**, by texting '**DONATE**' to **83321** or by sending cash, a cheque or a postal order to **DEC Tsunami Earthquake Appeal, PO Box 999, London, EC3A 3AA**. Alternatively, donate at any high street bank or post office.

[writer: **I Love Dust** | software: **Illustrator CS**]

CREATE THIS BUBBLY IMAGE

Using basic and intermediate Illustrator CS techniques, this tutorial shows how to work with the original photo supplied on the disc, and convert your computer into a veritable bubble machine



ON THE CD

start.jpg

YOUR GUIDE

I LOVE DUST is a UK-based design studio specialising in branding, graphic design, illustration and Web design. Recent clients include Hugo Boss, Marks & Spencer, Ash & Charlotte Hatherley, Double Dragon Music, Three Gut Records and Sneaker artist Dave White. The studio is currently working on projects for US-based store Deluxe, and has a collection of limited edition T-shirts, with some great collaborations coming soon. Visit **www.ilovedust.com** to find out more.

In recent years vector illustrations have become more and more commonplace – they're a staple of any designer's diet, and clients have been eating them up in the last 18 months or so. If tackled correctly, vector illustration can be the answer to many a creative brief, and there are a variety of different approaches to be explored. With all the techniques that are achievable now in Illustrator CS, you can tackle your artwork from a number of different angles and surprise yourself with the results.

The main focus in this bubble quest tutorial will be on the range of effects we have applied to the bubbles themselves. Of course no two bubbles are the same, so we have adopted a whole host of highlighting, layering and blending techniques to ensure that a realistic look is achieved.

We also demonstrate how the bubbles can be integrated into an environment, showing how they can interact with the background, bouncing light and bloating geometric shapes as they float across the image.

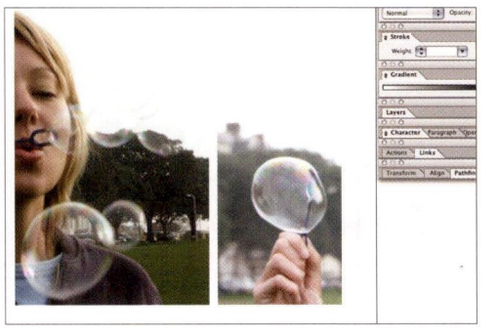
We'll cover the gradual construction of the bubble blower as well, giving detail on every aspect from her eyes to her hair. By following the tutorial you'll be able to pick up some handy tricks that we've developed to deal with skin tone and shading, and we will briefly discuss the arrangement of all the elements.

When you consider that these elements started off as separate items and have been collated together bit by bit, you'll be able to see that all sorts of options are wide open to an illustrator working in vectors. If you have an eye for composition and a bit of imagination, you can conjure up any number of scenes – and with this issue of *DCA SE* to hand you can learn how to make them look convincing, with some bubble magic thrown in!

The first few steps work with individual bubbles, and we then go on to describe the illustration as a whole. ■

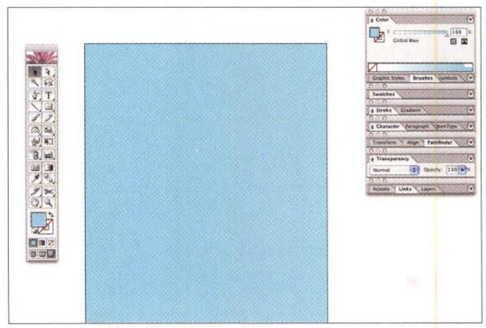
Step-by-step: forever blowing bubbles

Use a variety of Illustrator CS techniques to create some bubble magic!



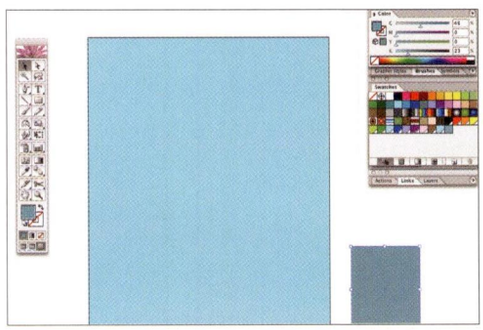
1: Setting up the CS file

We set up our document at 24.5cm wide by 31cm high, but you can work to any size and rescale – one of the benefits of vectors. You may want to import some pictures of bubbles for reference, so select File>Place and choose your files. Drag and lock them just off the artboard: Object>Lock>Selection.



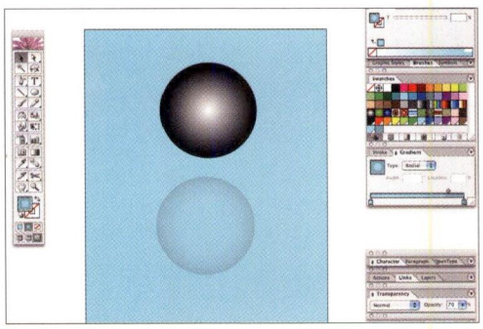
2: Select a temporary base colour

Use the Shape tool to drag a rectangle over your page, and select a base colour. We selected a light blue initially, as we're going for a sunny, bubble-blowing type of sky (Global sky 1). It may help to also lock this shape or keep it on a separate layer to the bubbles we'll go on to draw.



3: Start making a colour palette

It's a good habit to drag the colours you use from the Color Picker in the toolbar to the Swatch palette. Add the sky base colour, and also a swatch that's just a shade darker. With this darker blue selected, draw a circle with the Shape tool, holding down Shift to restrain the proportions. This should just be a fill.



4: Radial gradients

With the circle selected, pick the Radial gradient fill in the Swatch palette. In the Gradient palette, replace the black/white sliders with the light and darker blue you created in the Swatch palette. Drag them to the gradient scale and drag the handles off. Slide the marker towards the lighter colour, lifting the bubble's tone.

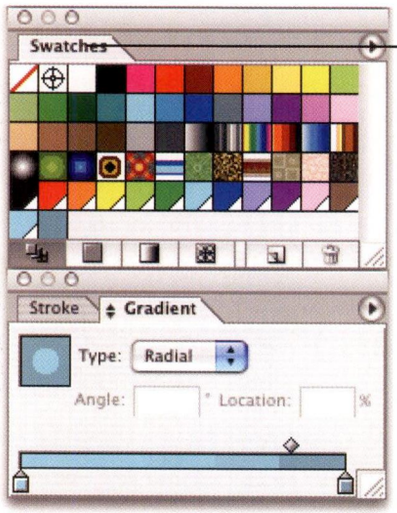
CREATE THIS BUBBLY IMAGE

Drawing your bubbles: handy tools

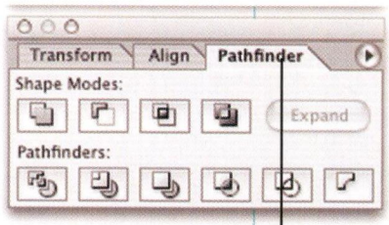
The tools in Illustrator CS make it very simple to create bubbles that appear both iridescent and realistic. A careful use of transparency and gradient fills will make your bubbles look as though they're floating off the page...

The Pen tool
The Pen tool is essential to trace all the shapes and build up the illustration

The White Arrow tool
This tool is invaluable in adjusting the highlight shapes you have drawn in your bubbles, as it allows each point to be moved individually

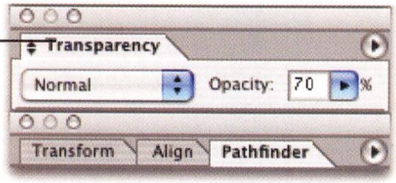


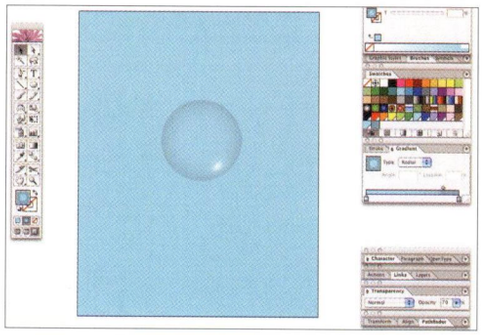
Radial gradients
Drag the gradients you make into the Swatch palette for easy reuse



The Pathfinder palette
Combine, exclude, intersect or subtract between two or more selected shapes by using these options in the Pathfinder palette

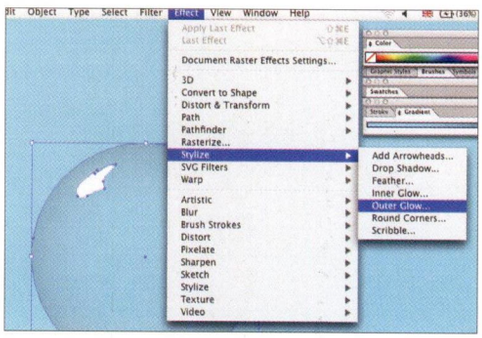
The Transparency palette
To alter the opacity of your bubbles, simply change the percentage shown here





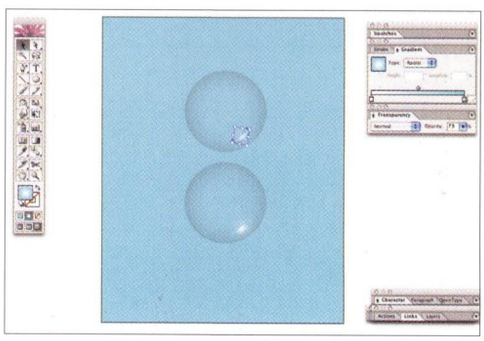
5: A whole host of bubbles

Now we are going to describe the five basic highlight/shading techniques we've applied to the bubbles you see in the final illustration. The highlights etc that are described next can be mixed up on each bubble. Think of each one as a little planet of translucency – unique, multicoloured and globular.



6: White and glowing

The simplest highlight is a little white shape you can draw using the Pencil tool with a white fill over the bubble you've already drawn. Now apply an outer glow to this white blob: Effect> Stylize>Outer Glow. You can further reduce the transparency of the highlight in the Transparency palette: Window>Transparency.



7: Gradient blob

On another bubble, or another face of the same bubble, draw a random shape with the Pencil tool but keep the lines smooth. With the shape selected, pick a radial gradient ranging from blue to white in the middle. Again apply an outer glow. Reduce the opacity by 10 or 20 % and zoom out to see how it looks.

People love these two-winged, blood-sucking, germ and disease carrying little guys. *Really!*

Awards TO DATE

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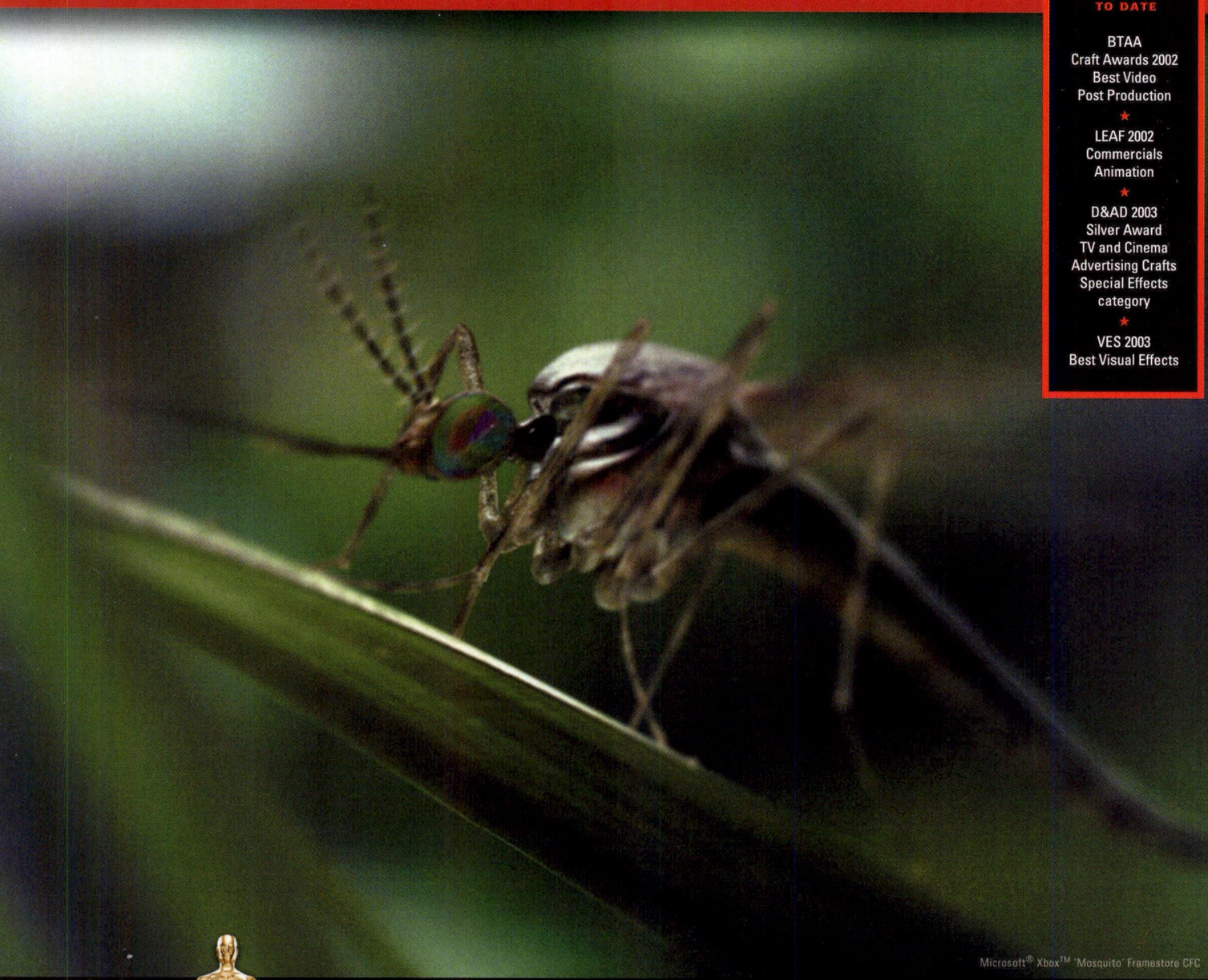

Microsoft® Xbox™ 'Mosquito' Framestore CFC

It's nice to be recognised. We know because the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences was nice enough to recognise our Maya® software with an Oscar for Scientific and Technical Achievement this year. So we would like to recognise the incredible commercial from Framestore CFC entitled Xbox Mosquito and its growing list of awards. We are proud the Xbox Mosquito was Made in Maya and that we were involved in helping such outstanding imagination and creativity come to life. Visit **www.alias.com/awards** to view and learn more about the Xbox Mosquito commercial and other examples of award winning creativity Made in Maya.

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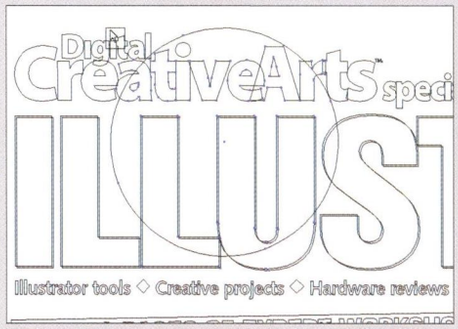
CREATE THIS BUBBLY IMAGE

Warped text

Convert type to outlines

On the cover version of the illustration, we decided to integrate the text with the bubbles. Lay out the text you want to warp, then convert your text to outlines to make the perimeter of each letter editable (Type>Convert to Outlines). Position a basic bubble gradient over the text.



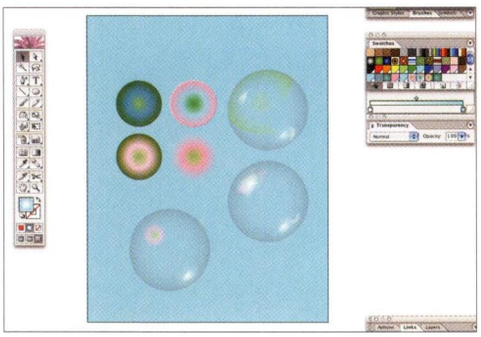
Separating the bubble and text

To make it easier to see what you're doing, press Apple & Y. This shows the paths in an Outline mode. Using the White Arrow tool, select the points of the letters that sit behind the bubble. With all points in the bubble selected, copy and paste them and the bubble to another area of the artboard.

Warp the text

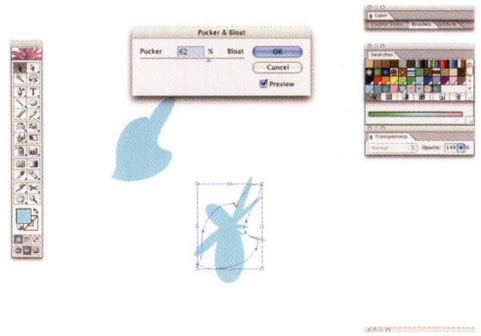
Working on just this bubble, select the type with the Black Arrow tool and choose Effect>Warp>Bulge. The window that appears has three sliders: Bend, Horizontal, Vertical. Making sure the preview box is checked, play with the effects of each until your type warps into a more concave shape.

Continued...



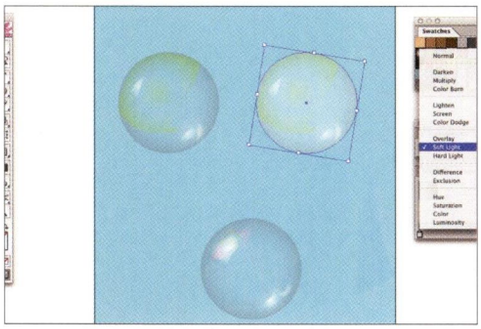
8: Garish radial gradients

Bring colour to your bubbles by drawing another random shape and filling it with a garish radial blur. Using the Color Mixer, create bright purples, pinks, greens, etc. Drag them into the Gradient palette; set on Radial Blur. Reduce the transparency to 35% and select the Color effect in the Transparency palette.



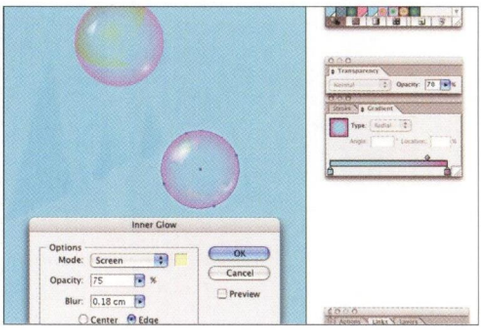
9: Bloating shapes

Some of the shapes you draw on the surface of these bubbles need to look pretty abstract. Select some of the shapes and apply a Bloating effect: Effect>Distort & Transform>Pucker & Bloat. Select the Preview checkbox and slide the scale towards Bloat. Now you have abstract shapes!



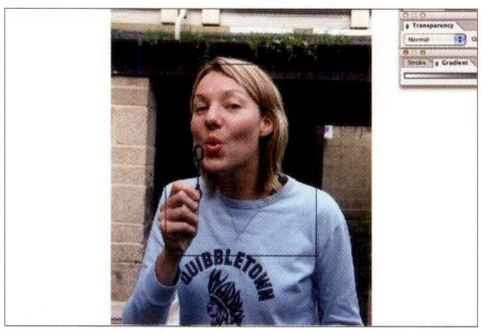
10: Try a linear gradient

To vary your bubbles, try a black-and-white linear gradient. It makes bubbles look very rounded, though sometimes too solid. Copy the bubble shape; paste in front. Select Linear Gradient in the Gradient palette; at a 45 degree angle, set it as 'Soft Light'. Details should show through and the bubble look more convex.



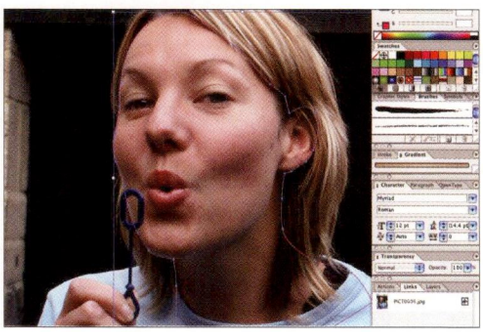
11: Inner glow

Also try adding an inner glow. On one of the bubbles, copy the basic shape and paste it in front. Replace the blue gradient with a purple one and apply an inner glow. (Stylize>Inner Glow). In the window, change the glow colour to pink and hit OK. Knock the transparency back, so the rest of the bubble shows through.



12: The bubble blower

We're now going to take you through how we created the vector-illustrated girl. First you need to import bubbleblower.jpg (File>Place) then navigate to the image. It may help you to make sure this picture is on a different layer to your bubbles. You may also want to lock the image: Object>Lock>Selection.

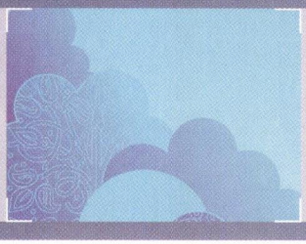


13: Selecting a stroke

In the Layers palette create another new layer, upon which you will draw the girl's face. Using the Pen or Pencil tool (whichever you find easier) begin to trace the basic shape of the girl's face, neck and body. It's best to use a thin stroke of say 0.25pt, which you can alter in the Stroke window.

Patterned clouds

The clouds in the background of this illustration are drawn using a series of circles that are blended together with the Add to Shape Area shape mode in the Pathfinder palette. They are filled with a gradient blending blue with purple, and are positioned to overlap each other. Using the Pencil tool with a1pt stroke, we drew an intricate pattern. This small square panel, when grouped, was repeated and rotated, positioned again and again, and grouped to build a large area of pattern. The stroke is in the same blue as the basic sky. By copying the outline of a cloud shape and pasting it in front of the pattern, you can create a clipping mask to crop the pattern to shape. With both elements selected, go to Object>Clipping Mask> Make. Now you have a cloud shape pattern that can be grouped with the gradient cloud to give a bit of texture to the vectors.

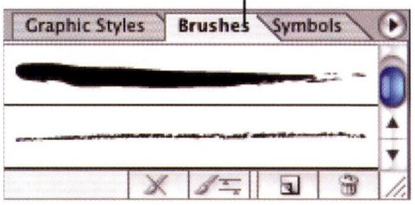


Turning a photograph into a vector illustration

Using a combination of Illustrator CS tools, you can replicate the original photograph and then enhance it into an effective vector illustration

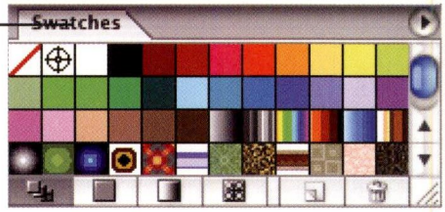
The Brushes palette

Brushes are very useful to bring some texture to the strokes you draw. We use them in this illustration as highlights



Your colour palette

Build up your colour palette to make it easy to repeat the use of colours. This is especially important with skin tones, because you need continuity

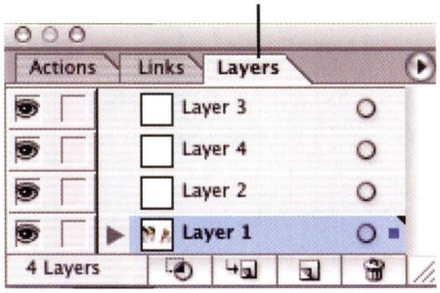


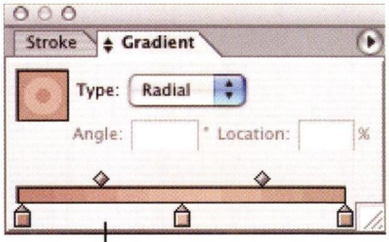
The Eyedropper tool

The Eyedropper tool allows you to sample colours from the bitmap image you have imported to trace over

The Layers palette

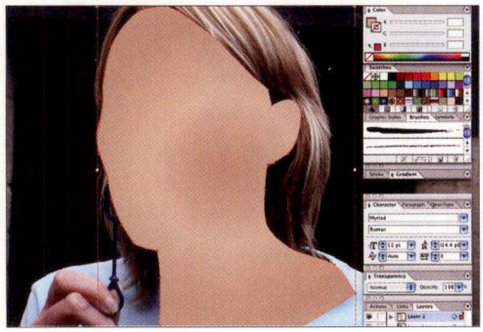
Use the Layers palette to organise the different elements of your illustration. If it helps, name your layers to avoid confusion. Clearly, we forget to...





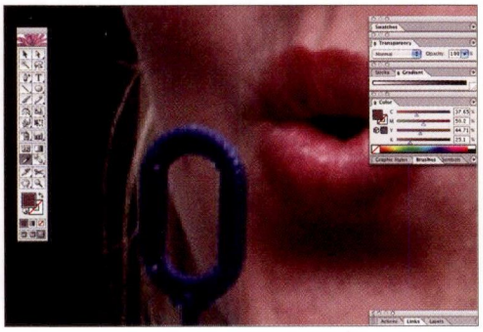
The Gradient palette

Use the Gradient palette to subtly blend the skin tones. Drag the sliders to alter the blend and adjust the angle to change direction



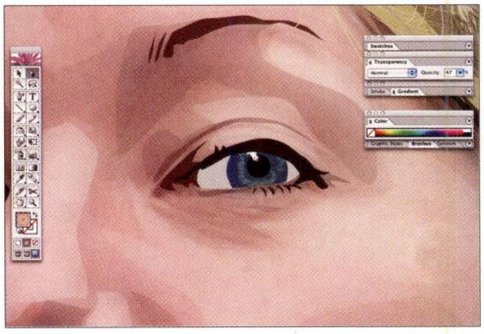
14: Select a basic skin tone

When you've traced the majority of the face shape, you need to select a basic skin tone from the imported image. Using the Eyedropper tool, click on the picture until it selects a realistic midtone that can act as the basic skin colour. Drag this swatch from the Color window into your Swatch palette.



15: Highlights and shadows

Fill the face with this basic skin tone by selecting the shapes and picking your skin tone from the palette. Now move on to build up your skin tone palette by selecting a darker tone from the image to suit the shadows cast by the face. Also, choose a colour for highlights.

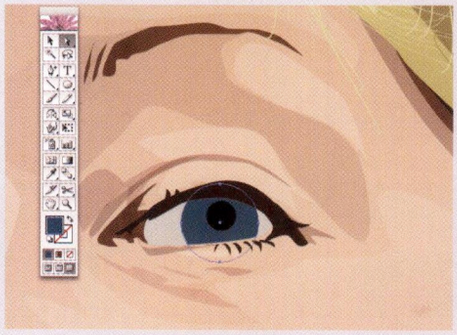


16: Working on different layers

The best way to organise elements you're tracing on the face is to work on separate layers – one for the basic face shape, one for large areas of shading and a top layer for details etc. Create these in the Layers palette. Reduce the opacity of all fill colours to 15% to see through to the photo and work over it easily.

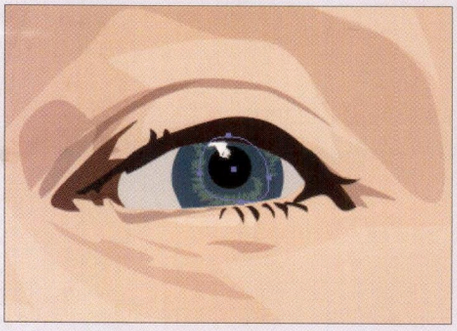
CREATE THIS BUBBLY IMAGE

Vector eyes



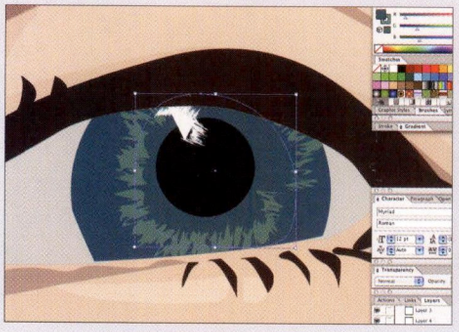
Basic eye shapes and colours

When selecting the eye colour for a vector illustration it's sometimes best to exaggerate the tone slightly. As shown here, we chose a deep aqua colour. Trace the basic shapes of the eye, such as the eyelash, pupil and iris, and fill with solid colours.



Iris detail

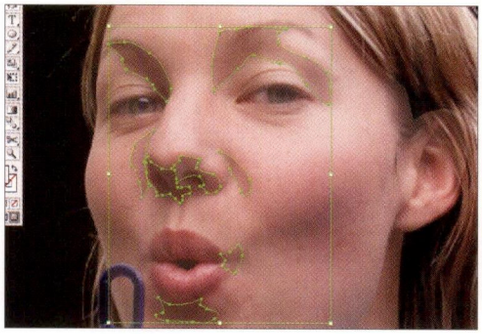
In a slightly lighter tone of aqua, draw a circular path in the iris using the Pen or Pencil tool, with a stroke (rather than a fill) set at 0.25pt. With this path selected, pick a preset brush named 'Thick Pencil 4'. Up the stroke size a bit until the textural stroke looks convincing as iris detail.



Pupil and white highlights

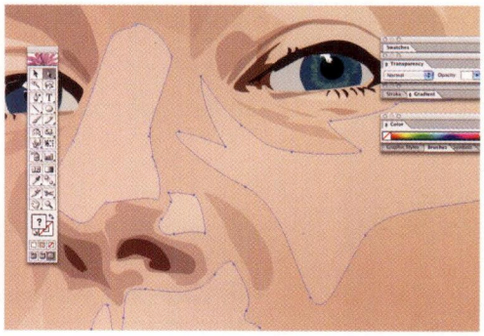
To make the eyes sparkle, the colours need to be carefully selected – so compare them closely with the photo, then exaggerate some elements. The whites of the eyes won't be bright white; make them a very pale grey. The brightest area should be a small white highlight on the pupil.

Continued...



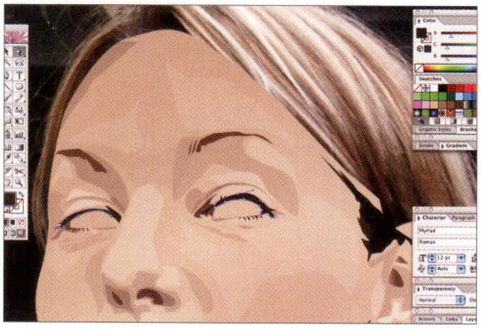
17: Drawing the face contours

Using the darker colour that you've selected at an opacity of 15%, start tracing the basic shadows and contours of the face using the Pen tool. As these build up, extend your colour palette to suit a wider range of shadows etc. Trace out the darker areas too and basically build towards more detail.



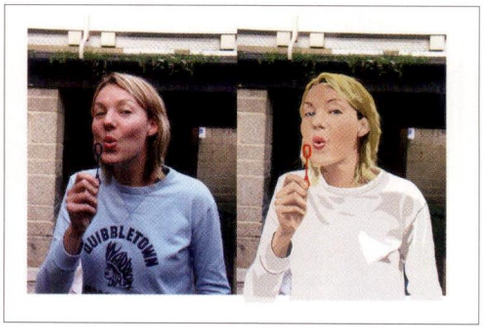
18: Drawing the highlights

When you've built up shadows, start tracing the areas of highlights. You may find it easiest to hide the Base Colour layer and the Shadow layer, so it's easier to see the photo. To hide a layer, click on the eye symbol next to it. Use a white fill and experiment with transparency to get realistic, subtle highlights.



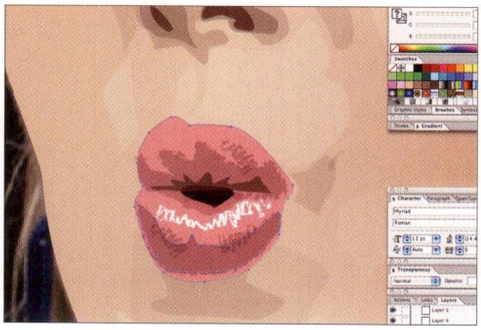
19: Drawing details

Start drawing in details such as the dark brown eyelash details and the eyebrow shapes. From time to time, select the filled areas and bring the opacity up to 100% to check that your colours are blending nicely with each other. Your face should now really be starting to take shape.



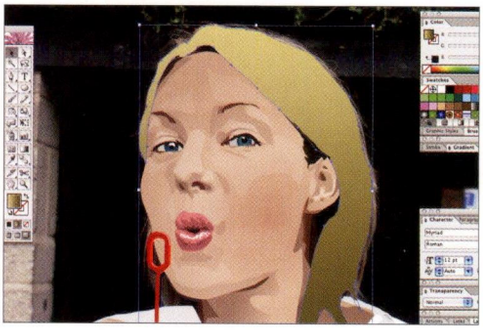
20: Compare your illustration

At this stage it may be helpful to copy the photograph and paste a second version of it to the side of the illustration. This will assist you in altering the skin tones to blend together successfully, because it'll help you view the entire face objectively, separate from your close-up tracing.



21: The mouth

The mouth begins with a basic shape traced with the Pen tool and filled with subtle pink. Add a midtone in slightly darker pink, and darker shadows where the lips are parted. Apply the same techniques used for the eyes, by drawing a curved line where there's a highlight and applying the sketchy brush to the stroke.



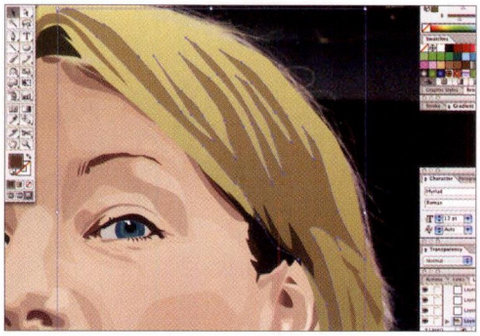
22: The hair shape

Draw the hair on a separate layer. Create the basic shape with the Pen and fill with a gradient shading from pale yellow to a bronze-brown. Ensure the Gradient window is open and click on the Gradient scale. It'll default to a black/white linear gradient. Replace the sliders with yellow/bronze to get a golden blend.

Flowers

When you start an illustration like this, you never know what elements you might end up including. In this inside version of this illustration, we decided some white flowers would not only balance the white details in the illustration of the girl, but would also help create some depth if applied with a careful use of scale. The flowers are drawn very simply with the Circle and Pencil tools, and filled with white at an opacity of 50%. The details within the flowers are knocked out of the fill colour, using the Exclude function in the Pathfinder palette. The intention with these flowers was that they should be subtle and in no way intrusive to the main focus of the illustration.

Continued...

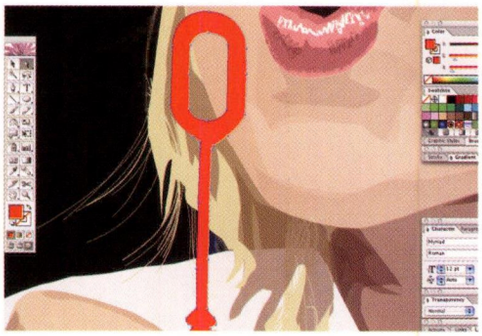


23: Midtones in the hair

Now block out the midtone areas of the hair and fill with a light brown colour. Knock the opacity back to about 50% to let some of the yellow tones show through. Add darker sections to the hair at the roots and where shadows fall, to bring a bit of depth to the vectors.

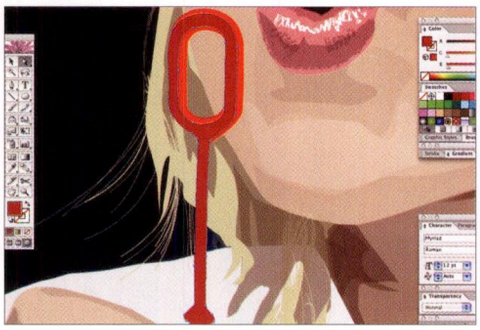
24: Individual strands

Using the Pen set at a thin stroke of 0.25pt, draw a series of curved, smooth lines to look like single strands of hair. Copy and paste these repeatedly, altering the angle and scale with the Transform handles, until you've built up sections of detail. Place them around the face in accordance with the original photo.



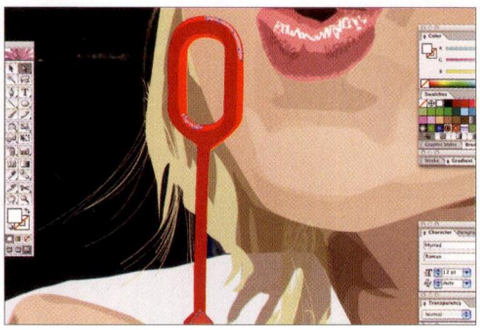
25: Drawing the wand

Other areas are dealt with in exactly the same way as the face and hair. Trace the shape of the bubble wand using the Pen. Draw the inner hoop of the wand head over the top, then with both elements selected click the Exclude icon in the Pathfinder palette. This will knock the hole out of the head of the wand.



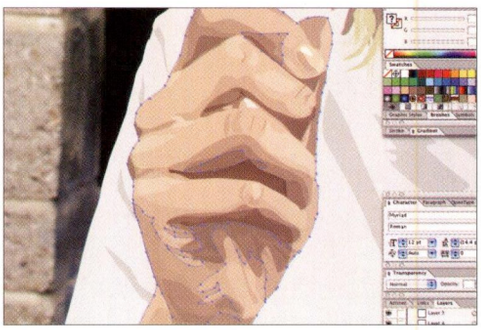
26: Give the wand depth

Copy the wand shape and paste it in front (Apple & F). Fill the pasted wand shape with a slightly darker shade of red. Using the arrow keys, offset it slightly from the brighter red, and with the White Arrow tool adjust individual points to give the wand a 3D contour.



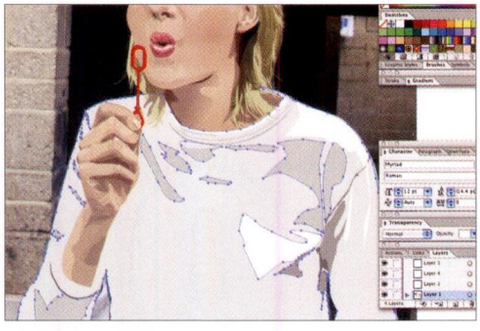
27: Give the wand highlights

Using the Pen tool once again, add subtle highlights to the wand by filling it with white and knocking the opacity back to 60%. Try not to make these highlights too regular in shape – they sometimes look more realistic if the perimeter is a little bit wobbly.



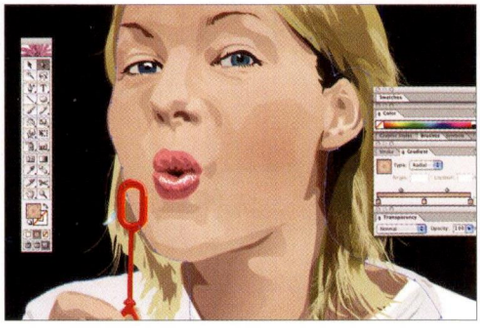
28: Drawing the hand

Your next step is to draw the hand, which is accomplished using exactly the same techniques that you used to create the face. You can employ the same colours as well, and work with transparency in order to blend all the areas of colour together.



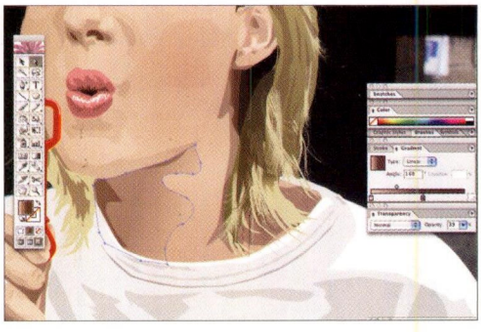
29: The clothes

The bubble blower's white top is made up from basic flat vectors of white and grey. These can be traced in with the Pen tool – and you should avoid using too much detail. If the top is left quite plain, the focus can remain on the face and bubbles.



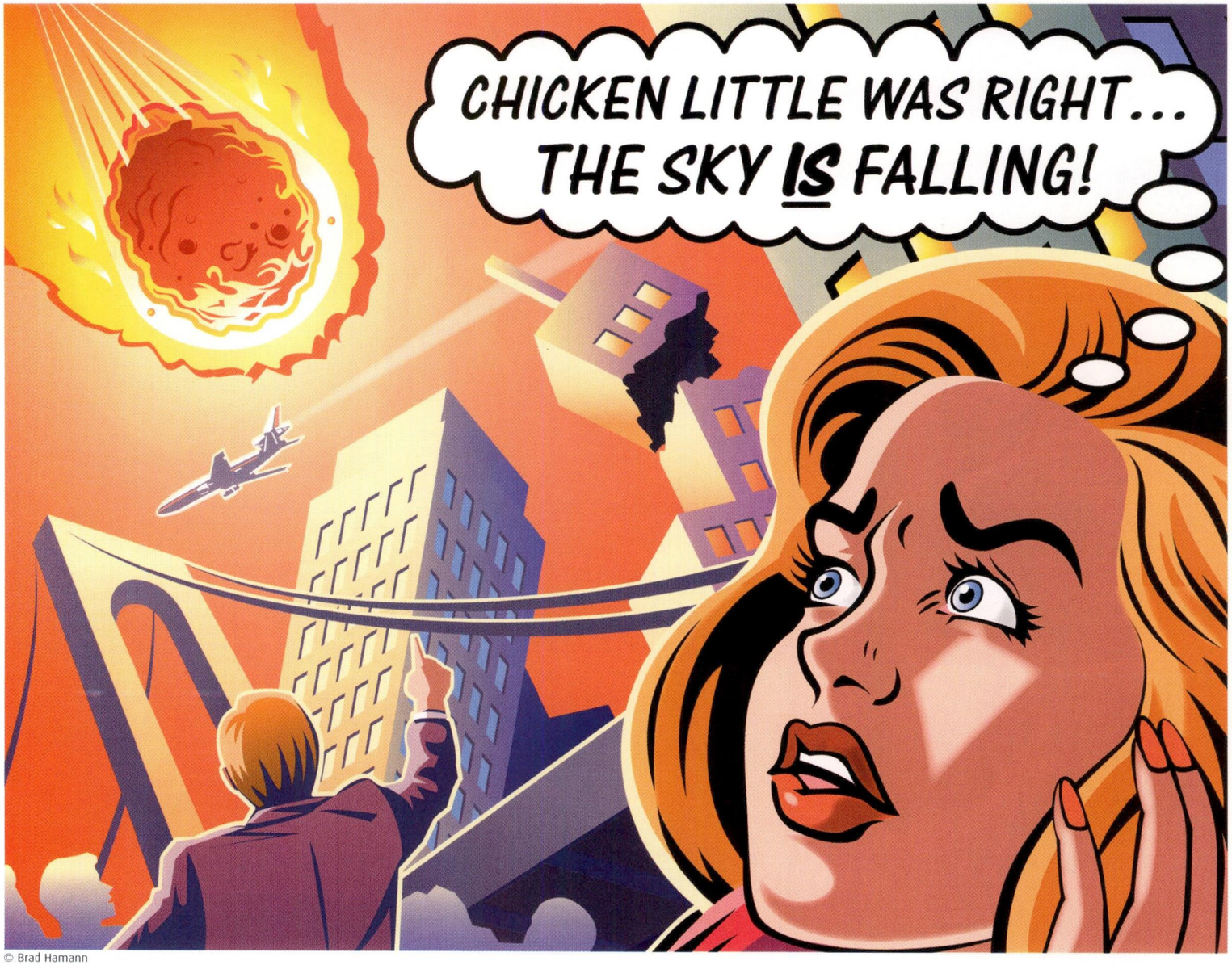
30: Gradient blending

We decided some skin tones needed knocking back a bit for a better finish. Select the face shape that you filled with solid colour; turn it into a radial gradient by clicking on the scale in the Gradient palette. Replace the black/white sliders with two near tones of skin colour – the darker one under the cheekbone.



31: Reduce the contrast

Apply subtle gradients to other areas of skin and reduce garish contrasts by playing with opacity. View your illustration as a whole, and see which areas need toning down. You can also add more – on our inside illustration we added a spattering of coloured leaves to break up the blueness. But keep it subtle!



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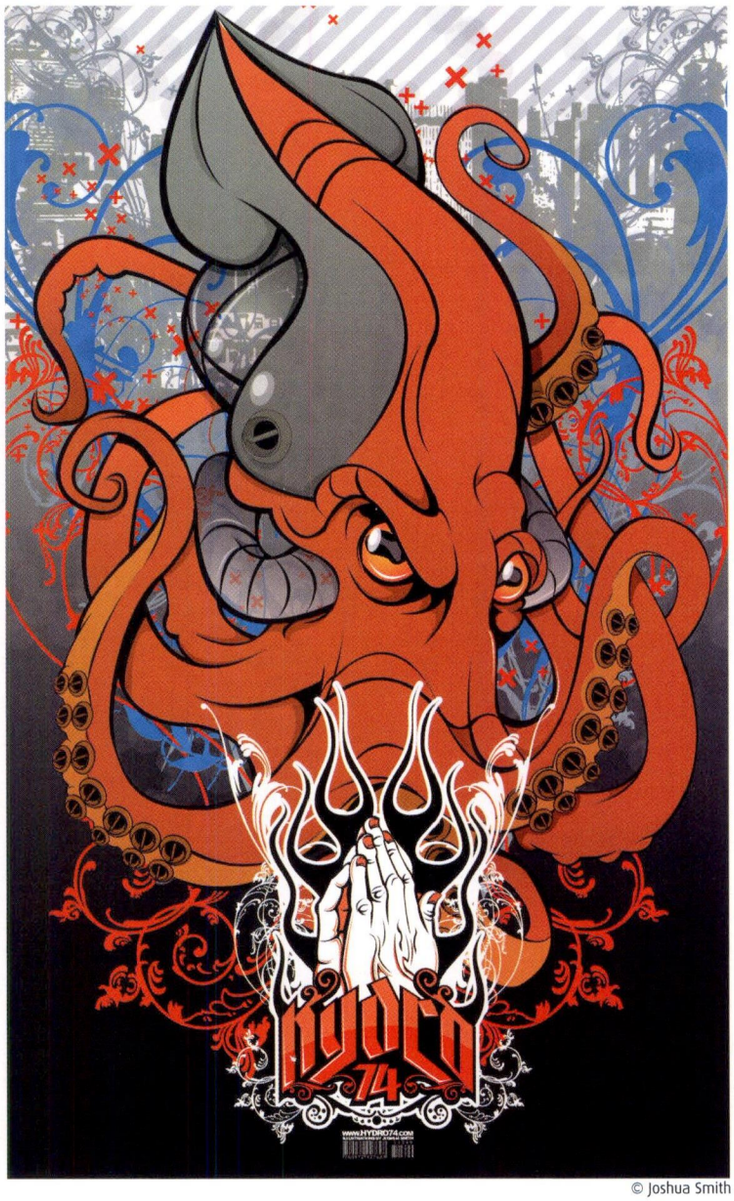
AN INTRO TO ILLUSTRATOR

Karl Foster explains the fundamentals of Adobe's leading vector graphics package and gathers comment from expert users



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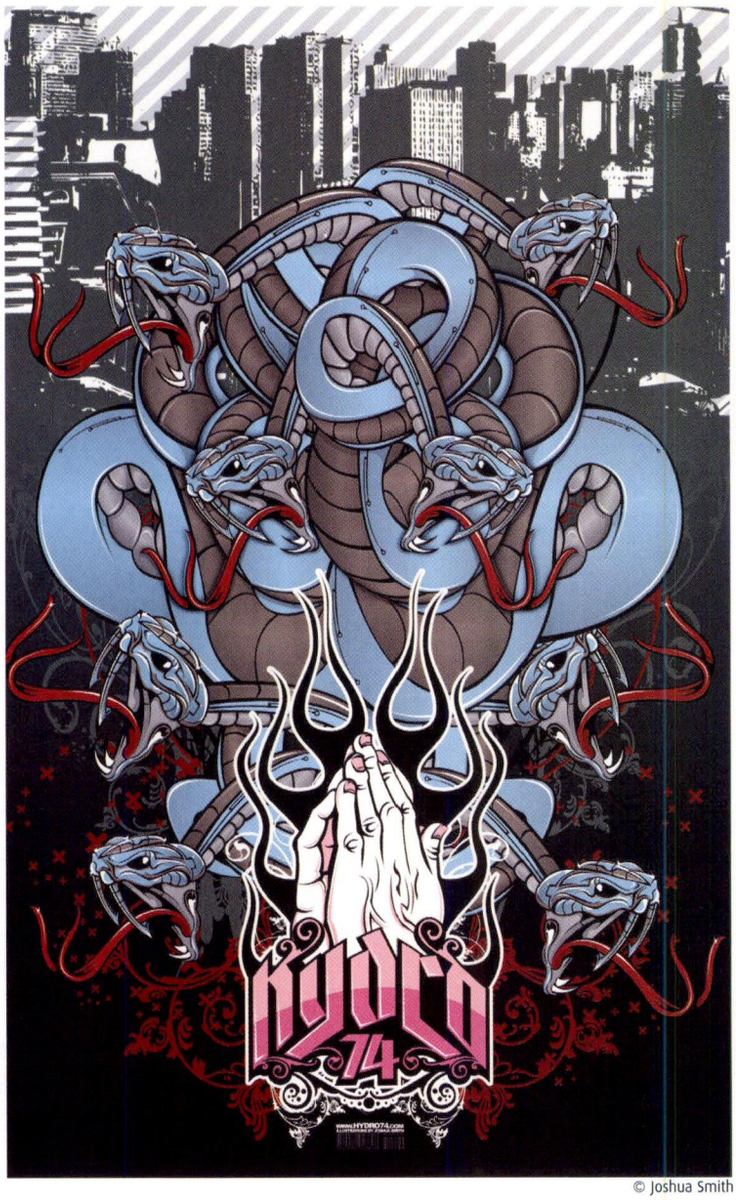

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Just as Adobe's Photoshop has revolutionised the work of digital photographers, Illustrator has given designers a host of new creative opportunities to explore. While the former package is very much about manipulating bitmap images, Illustrator is first and foremost a vector graphics creation suite. That is, rather than offering a grid of pixels in which to generate images, it enables you to describe shapes by means of vector-based mathematical descriptions.

While this may sound complex, actually creating vector-based shapes is really quite simple, thanks to the host of user-friendly tools available. And after a few minutes' experimentation, a key advantage of this approach becomes clear: a graphic can be resized as large as you like without jagged edges appearing along its outline. Rather than pumping up pixels, with the inevitable result that they show up individually, the dimensions describing the shape increase in value so that edges stay sharp no matter how large the graphic becomes.

In order to get under way with this supremely powerful design tool, it's essential to understand that the shapes being created in the work area are not made up of pixels, but are descriptions of shapes that can be manipulated as you wish. With that notion on board, it's the work of a few hours to create an eye-catching graphic ready for print or the Web. With Illustrator now in its CS incarnation, boasting faster performance, enhanced typographical controls, native PDF support, 3D effects and enhanced print capabilities, there has never been a better time to explore the potential of vector graphics creation.

Seasoned Illustrator professional Joshua Smith, profiled elsewhere in this feature, is a keen exponent of the package: "Adobe Illustrator is a very powerful program and each time there's a new version out, I get excited. This past year I've been getting into using a few different features in CS. I use Pathfinder, Warp, 3D and Layers religiously. I'm pretty straightforward when I develop pieces, and they don't get too complex using Gradient Mesh or other features that the software offers."

Joshua, better known as Hydro74 (**www.hydro74.com**) is a senior art director for Relevant, a Florida-based company that produces books and magazines, and also takes on freelance work in his spare time. "I've been working with Adobe Illustrator for about eight years now, and it was only in the past four years that I started to take the software seriously and realise that I can create amazing things with it. If I had a choice, I would only use Illustrator."

Joshua recalls his first experience of graphic design back in 1994 and his amazement at what co-designers were creating. "Once I started to learn more about what I could do with various programs, and seeing what others were doing, it changed my vision of where I wanted to go and develop my work. So yes, I really believe that Adobe Illustrator has changed the face of illustration, even in the fine art

© Sharon Steuer

community. Digital pieces are starting to get the same respect as painted prints. To be able to edit a piece with ease has made the software a very important part of both the fine art and digital art communities."

Another Illustrator veteran, Brad Hamann (**www.bradhamann.com**) has been using the software since 1993, although his experience as a freelance designer stretches back 28 years. For him, Illustrator beats traditional design media: "I love the total flexibility of creating shapes, resizing, adjusting colours and composition. I love the precision of the line I can create with Illustrator. It gets me to where I want to go faster than working with pen, ink and paint."

Brad's experience encompasses both old-school techniques and the latest generation of digital design, and he uses both of Adobe's leading graphics packages: "There's been a trend towards a more graphic look in editorial illustration. I always compare Illustrator to paper collage (a la Matisse) and Photoshop to wet paint, but I have begun to incorporate more Photoshop into my work. I found I was able to easily translate my comic book/animation-based style into Illustrator, and also found I could work faster with better results. Of course, deadlines have shrunk drastically, but delivering work as files over the Internet is a joy."

Brad has also taught people how to use Illustrator, and advises patience and playfulness when using the software: "For most people the Pen tool is the big hump to get over, and if you can get a working facility with it, you'll be on your way. It isn't intuitive... I compare it to trying to learn how to drive a stick shift (manual gear) in a car. There will be a lot of gear-grinding at the beginning, but when you get frustrated, draw rectangles and fill them with pretty patterns and gradients until your blood pressure drops back to normal, and then go back and try again."

Steve Kurth, who lives and works in Portland, Maine, has also taught graphic design and has written a number of books, including *The Illustrator 10 Shop Manual* (New Riders) and *The Hidden Power of Illustrator CS: Web Graphics Techniques* (Sybex). Certain of Illustrator's new features appeal greatly to him: "Although my favourite tools are the Direct Selection and the Pen tools, I am amused and delighted by Appearance and Graphic Styles. I find that many things that were previously accomplished with copy and paste can be done easily and efficiently with Appearance. I often create graphic styles from my multi-fill objects and/or store the objects themselves in a persistent symbol library. I like symbols for their ability to retain all their features when an instance is broken from the symbol definition."

In Steve's view, computer-based design tools have had quite an impact on the output of today's artists: "You can definitely see a specific style that comes from using apps like Illustrator or Macromedia's Freehand exclusively. In some ways, I think the traditional role of illustration has been changed by the hegemony of

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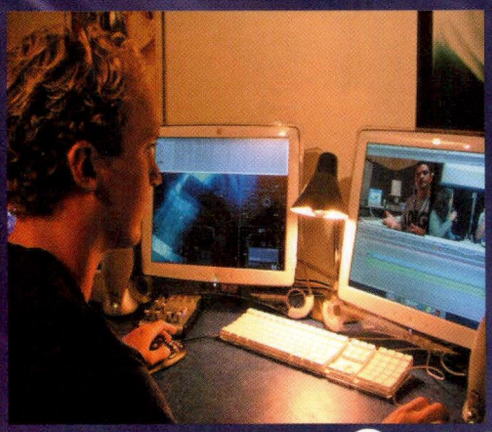

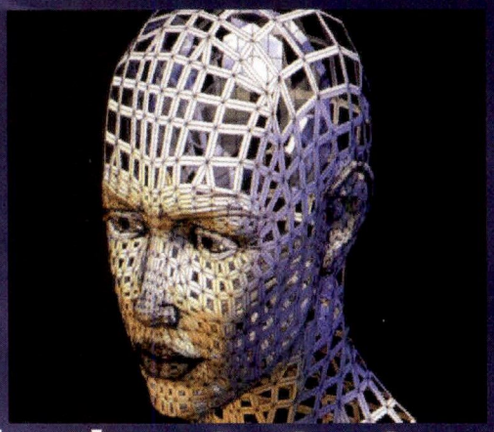

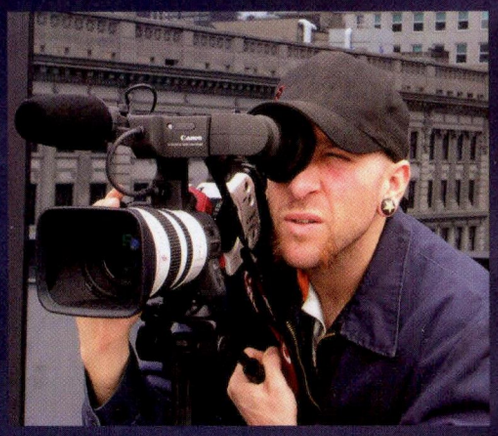

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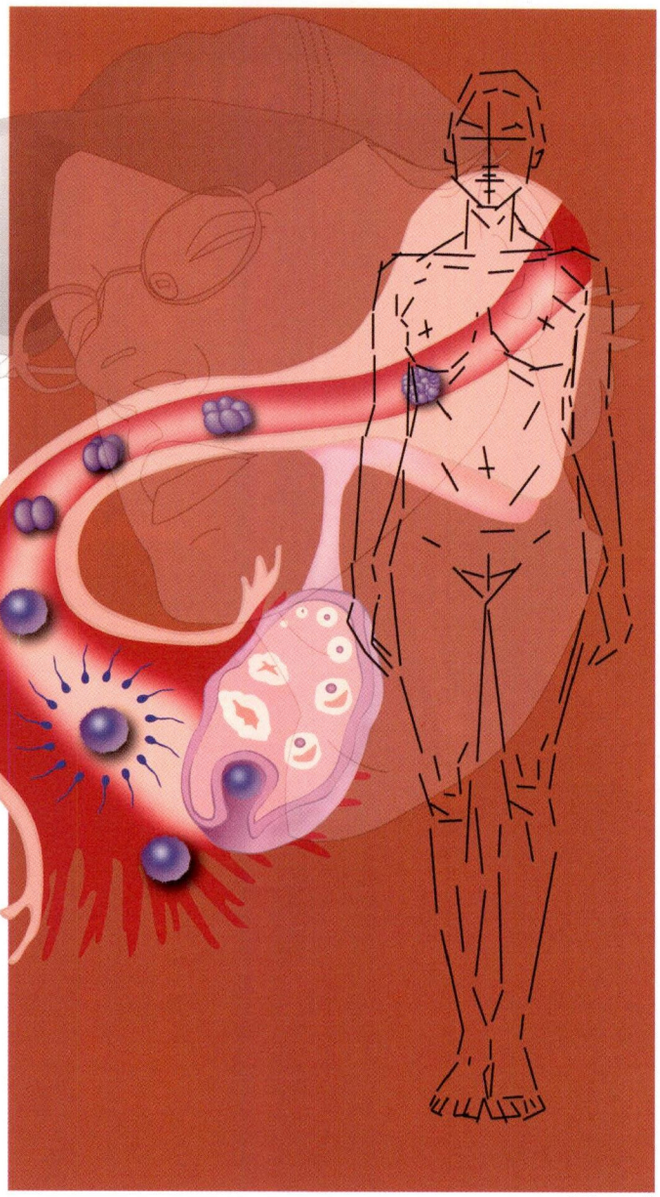

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ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

Sharon Steuer

www.ssteuer.com

New Haven-based Sharon has been using Illustrator since 1987, and the experience she's gained over the years has lead to success in publishing. Her *Adobe Illustrator CS WOW! Book* (Peachpit Press/Adobe) features the work of more than 100 top Illustrator artists. Now in its seventh edition, it has twice received the Benjamin Franklin Award for best computer book. She is also the author of *Creative Thinking in Photoshop* and has won the Faber Birren Color Award and Windsor Newton Painting Award for her non-digital art. She describes Illustrator as having had "astounding impact" on the work of the designer: "It's likely that practically all final versions of corporate logos are created in Illustrator."

Sharon has met a wide variety of artists while researching the *WOW!* books and finds that each has their own way of working: "As an artist, it's always exciting to see how others enlist the help of creative tools – and the magic of Illustrator (versus raster art programs) is that the secrets of how an image is created remain with the final file."

computer art. And that isn't necessarily a good thing." He does, however, appreciate the difficulties faced by newcomers to the realm of digital design: "The problems most novice users of Illustrator have are related to an incomplete understanding of selection in general and the Direct Selection tool in particular, and the various ways the basic transformation tools work. Stick with learning those things until you're really comfortable with them, and the rest will be gravy." You can see examples of Steve's work at **www.illustratoranswers.com**.

Hailing from New Haven, CT, Sharon Steuer has taught Illustrator since 1987 (v1.1) and has produced award-winning books, more on which can be found in the 'Artist Spotlight' panel. Her Illustrator work appears more painterly than some of the hard-edged graphics typical of computer-based design: "I've always loved the Pen tool, but my personal work most often now relies on the brush tools. Brushes in Illustrator allow me to work in digital 'inks' and 'watercolours' with complete control to edit each of the marks – something I don't have with traditional media or even with Photoshop. I use Photoshop completely differently – I consider it a digital painting and printmaking medium. So Illustrator is a drawing and watercolour-like medium for me. In traditional media, I paint with oil paints."

Sharon admits that there's quite a struggle awaiting Illustrator novices, even those already acquainted with pixel-editing packages: "Illustrator feels more foreign to the beginner than Photoshop or Painter – it requires a bit more of a learning curve because it doesn't fit into the metaphors of art creation in traditional media. However, if a beginner is willing to take some time to learn the Pen tool and to understand how 'objects' are created in Illustrator, it can become a wonderfully intuitive tool."

A study of our four Illustrator experts' work featured in these pages reveals four very different visual styles. From slick, modern-looking graphics to images reminiscent of paintings, the examples show the flexibility of the software and how different designers adopt different approaches when using it.

The only real criticism levelled at the package during the course of the interviews was that Adobe had neglected to incorporate Streamline – a program that automatically creates line-art tracings – but it's something we may see featured in a future version. For the time being, there are sufficient tools on offer to cope with the most demanding of design briefs, covering a wealth of graphics genres. Whatever results from your own experimentation, you can be sure that Illustrator packs power aplenty to cope with the design demands made on it.

Throughout the rest of this magazine, we'll be looking at techniques to help boost your Illustrator prowess to something approaching the expertise of our interviewees. Meantime, take a close look at their work and be inspired!

Essential Illustrator add-ons

Take your Illustrator work to the next level with some smart hardware acquisitions

Graphics tablet/monitor

While a graphics tablet offers the intuitive feel of using a pen to work up your designs, an even better solution is to apply the pen to the monitor. That's what Wacom's range of Cintiq monitors is all about. Available in 15, 18 and 21-inch screen sizes, the Cintiq makes computer-based design feel as natural as using pen and paper.

Extra monitor

A second monitor is a great asset when working in any design package. Arrange your palettes on one screen and devote the other to the document. Such an arrangement makes for a very slick workspace and enhances workflow no end. The monitor pictured is a LaCie 321 LCD plus hinged arm, so that it doesn't intrude on your desk space.

Colour calibrator

If aiming to submit work to clients on a professional basis, it's vital to ensure that the colours you see are the colours they see. Make sure you keep your monitor calibrated, and pass on the ICC profile to whoever is viewing your work. The LaCie blue eye pro attaches to the monitor and offers single-click calibration.

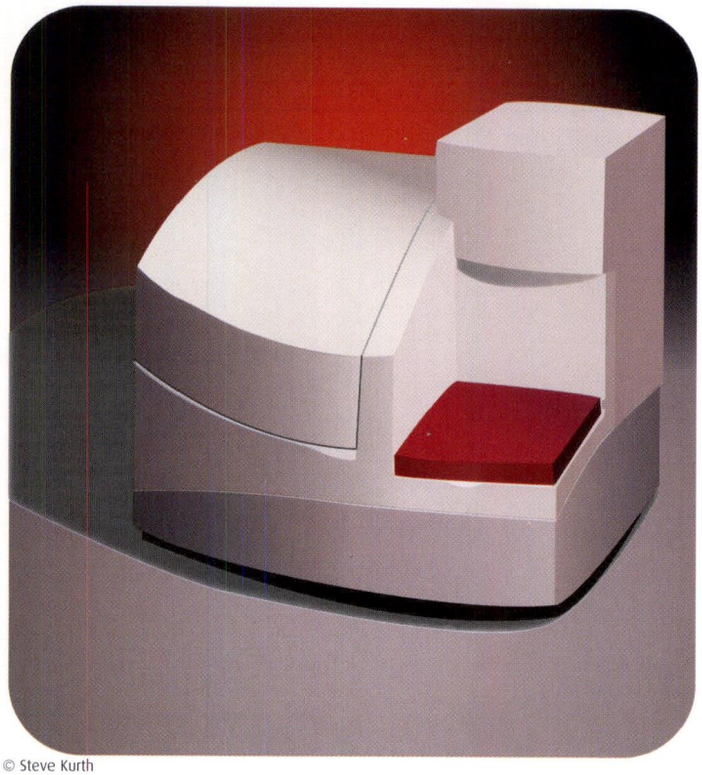
ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

Joshua Smith

www.hydro74.com

Joshua currently resides in Orlando, Florida, and works for a media firm. He admits to being an Illustrator addict, but is not so totally engrossed that he uses it for everything: "I get a lot of requests on how to make different dirty effects. If you need a spray paint splatter, then go out and buy some spray paint. The need to think outside the box is a must. When you have a powerful piece of software, you begin to get lazy in how you approach a task." He also suggests building a library of elements: "Think of them as the seasoning in your project. If you need organic-looking pieces, go out and take photos of trees, leaves and so forth. Scan them in, threshold them and either trace or streamline them. Knowing when you need to add elements to your piece and having the items will save you time."

A self-taught Illustrator artist, Joshua originally planned to become a teacher, but was bitten by the design bug: "I never knew how addictive design would become and how much it would consume me, but it did. My biggest piece of design advice is to respect it enough to sacrifice, love it enough to know this is what you want to do, and really spend time with your software. Always ask questions of other designers. You may or may not get an answer, but keep asking."



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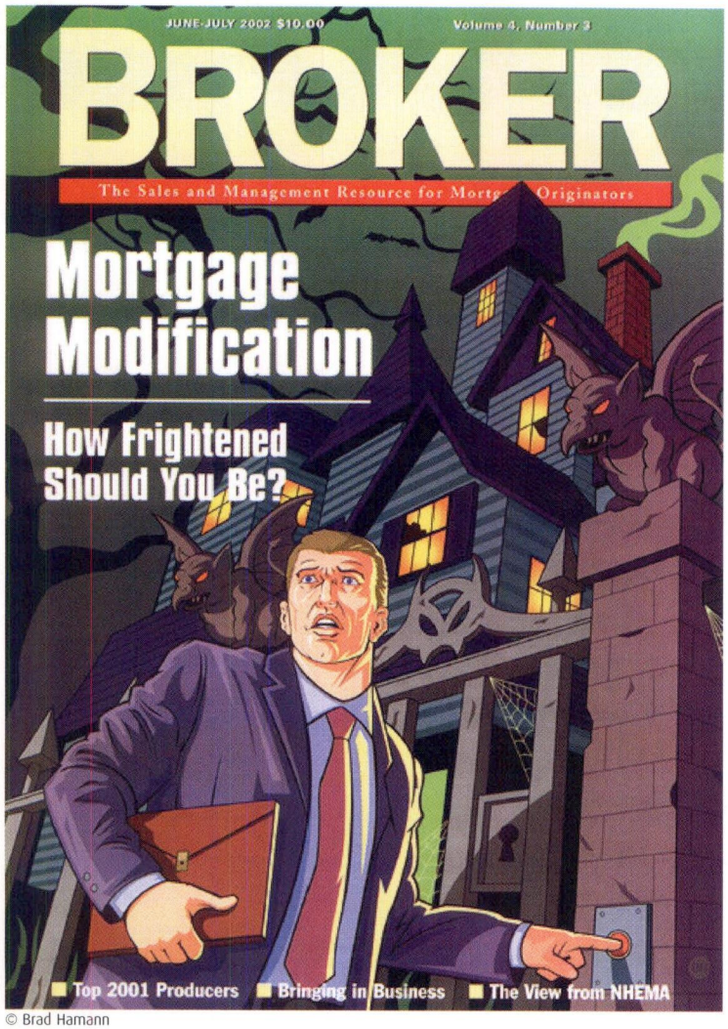

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Web resources

Adobe

www.adobe.com/products/tips/illustrator.html

An obvious first port of call, Illustrator's publisher Adobe has a wealth of tutorials demonstrating oft-used techniques and many of the new facilities in the CS version. A one-time registration offers access to further tips and tutorials authored by industry luminaries and Adobe's product experts. There are even printer-friendly versions for when you're learning offline.

Pixel2Life

www.pixel2life.com

Among the huge range of tutorials aimed at a wide variety of computer-based graphic artists, Pixel2Life hosts a good number of articles for Illustrator users. From applying type on a path to understanding clipping masks, there's plenty of guidance on how to power up your design sessions. Most tutorials are rated by site visitors and many have difficulty ratings.

Tutorial Outpost

www.tutorialoutpost.com

Another portal site, Tutorial Outpost offers access to a huge number of Illustrator-based guides. The very basics are on offer, alongside material for the more advanced user. The most-accessed pages by month appear in a separate list, as do the most-accessed tutorials of all time, so you can quickly see what's getting other people excited.

Inspiration station

Illustrator World

www.illustratorworld.com

A community site for artists creating vector-based graphics, Illustrator World hosts examples of work by many leading professional designers, plus contributions from talented amateurs. Although the site is a little slow to load, much of the artwork on show is well worth waiting to see. It's also possible to submit your own creations.

deviantART

http://browse.deviantart.com

For a little leftfield inspiration, take a browse around deviantART, an online community in which artists and art lovers can interact in a variety of ways. View artwork submitted by members and discuss it in the online forum. You can even earn deviantDOLLARS by selling prints of your own design work.

ArtWanted.com

www.artwanted.com

Treat yourself to a tour of thousands of designs created in many types of media, including electronic. It's possible to search for specific artists among the 9,000 listed, and the site hosts a message board so you can compare notes with others. Also, if a piece of work takes your fancy, you may be able to buy a copy.

THE CREATIVE MAGAZINE FOR MAC USERS

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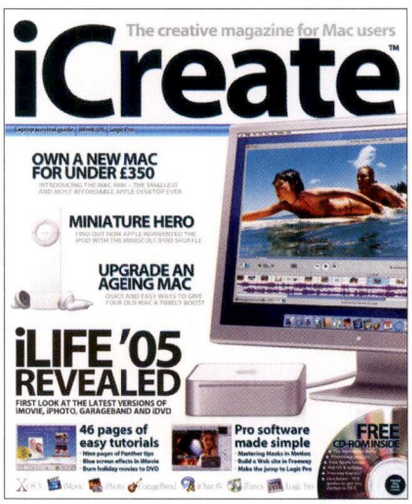
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WORKSHOP CONTENTS

TECHNIQUE WORKSHOPS

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38 ..... Create realistic metallic objects
42 ..... Master the art of gradients
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CREATIVE WORKSHOPS

58 ..... Merge vector illustrations
64 ..... Design a cool T-shirt
70 ..... Capture the retro look
74 ..... Create a videogames character

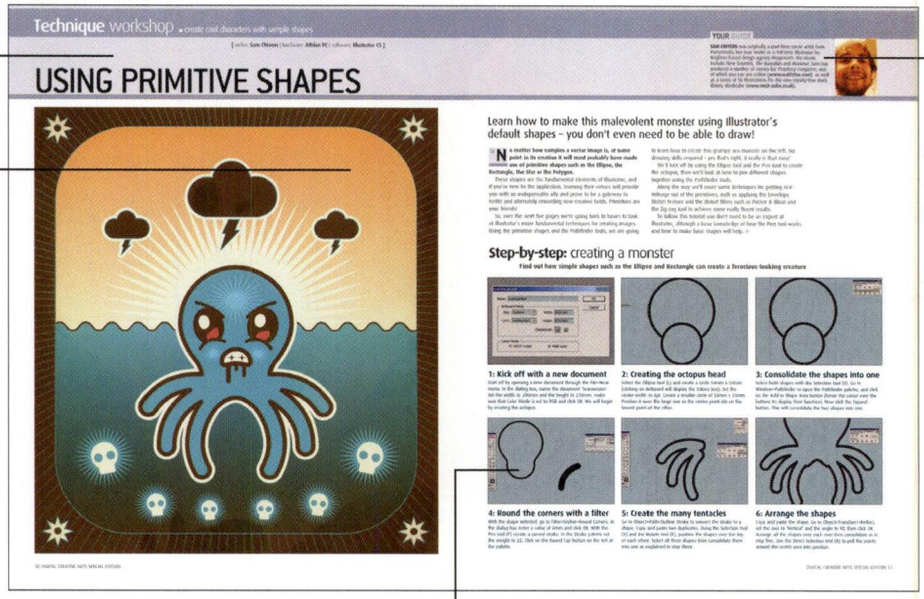
Illustrator workshops

Our workshops explained

The aim of our step-by-step workshops is to furnish you with the skills and techniques you need to develop your creativity in Illustrator. Each tutorial is written by an Illustrator expert and screenshots are provided at every stage

Start to finish
All of our projects have a logical start and end point. We'll show you how to achieve a certain effect or technique without skipping steps or assuming prior knowledge

Your experts
We go out of our way to find experts who know the programs they are writing about inside out. This way you know that the information we provide can be trusted and is always accurate


Technique workshop
USING PRIMITIVE SHAPES
Learn how to make this malevolent monster using Illustrator's default shapes – you don't even need to be able to draw!
Step-by-step: creating a monster
Find out how simple shapes such as the Ellipse and Rectangle can create a ferocious-looking creature
1: Kick off with a new document
2: Creating the octopus head
3: Consolidate the shapes into one
4: Round the corners with a filter
5: Create the many tentacles
6: Arrange the shapes

Look for the logo

Learn new techniques with our support files

Look out for this logo as you work through the projects in the magazine. When you see this, you can be sure that all the files you need to complete the tutorial are on your free CD-ROM

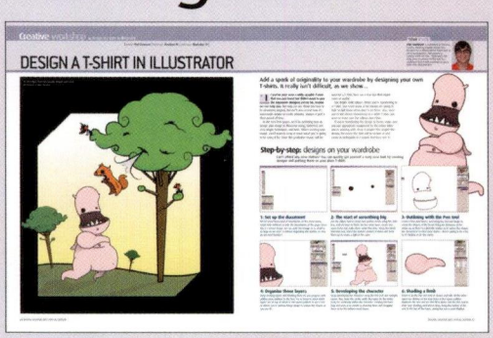
ON THE CD
Contax N Digital/ ContaxND_04.JPG

Project files
Support files for every project are included on the cover CD. Below the logo is a list of every file needed

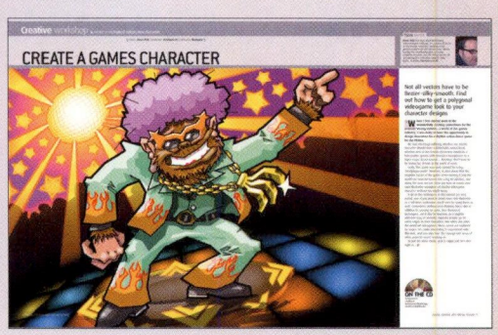
Look and learn
All of our tutorials are illustrated with screenshots so you can see exactly what is going on

Hands-on advice at a glance...

3D programs can produce some stunning results, but do mean you having to dedicate days on end to rendering and modelling. However, with some nifty application of gradients and meshes, you can get the same look but in a fraction of the time. It's all starts on page 32...



There's nothing quite so satisfying as finding a really cool T-shirt with the perfect design. But if you find that the shops can't cater for your exquisite taste, you can always make your own. We show you how to do exactly that on page 64



It's not as if we need an excuse to put a monkey in the magazine, but this time it's for a very good reason. This dancing simian also serves to illustrate how you can get that videogame look without taking the clichéd big-chested, small-brained hero route...

[writer: **Christa Björkstam** | hardware: **Pentium PC** | software: **Illustrator**]

3D EFFECTS IN ILLUSTRATOR

Get the 3D look by applying gradients and meshes

YOUR GUIDE

CHRISTA BJÖRKSTAM will soon graduate from senior high school in Helsinki where she's been studying art for the past three years. In addition to using traditional media such as oil and ink, she also favours Illustrator and Photoshop. Her future plans are to be accepted at the University of Art and Design Helsinki to study interior and furniture design.

You don't need a dedicated 3D program in order to get the 3D look. We show how you can bend Illustrator's tools to your 3D whims

ON THE CD

3D reference. jpg

We all know how to make a picture flat, right? It's easy – just draw on a page and use flat colours. Vector art is especially associated with a flat look because the vector look is usually created from patches of solid colour. As a result, Illustrator isn't necessarily the first port of call if you want to create a textured, moulded, rounded piece of work.

This is a real shame because there are many ways of using this magnificent program, and there are just as many techniques to apply using the built-in tools. Creating three-dimensional art may seem difficult for people who haven't tried it before, but Illustrator helps you on the way to becoming an expert.

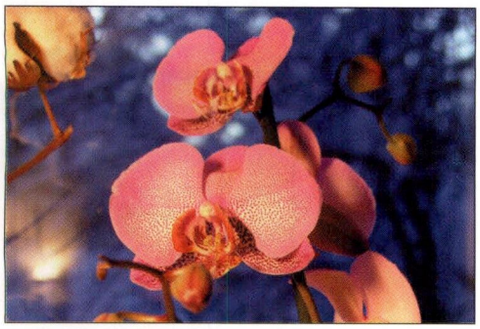
In this tutorial we'll concentrate on creating 3D effects using the Mesh tool. There are of course other ways of making pictures look 3D – which will be covered in this tutorial to some extent – but it's the Mesh technique that takes centre stage.

Although Illustrator can help you on your 3D way, we don't want to give the impression that the program will hand you a finished piece of artwork on a silver tray. Your perception still plays a vital role in the construction of an image, and there are three principle guidelines to consider when creating the impression of 3D: perspective, the light source, and the shadows which come with it. This holy trinity will add the flair of realism that 3D art relies on, so always bear them in mind.

When creating your first 3D artwork, start with something simple. Try tackling a still life that has clear dimensions, such as a box or a vase. This tutorial is a bit more advanced, but we still cover all the basic techniques that can be applied to almost any image.

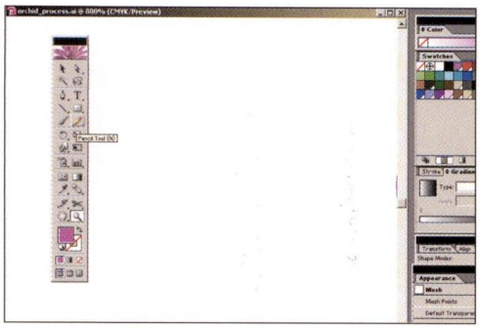
Step-by-step: create 3D effects with clever shading

It's possible to get a high-end 3D look just by applying some clever gradients



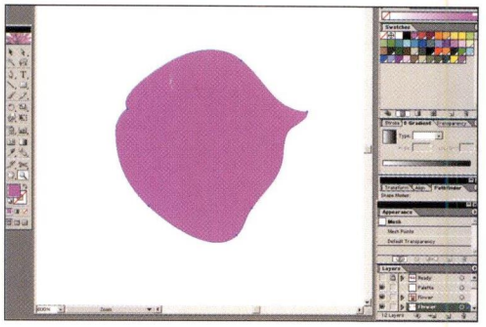
1: Preferences

If possible, try and use a real model instead of a photo reference for your work. This is especially important when doing a 3D still life, because you'll be able to capture the real-life touched, such as shapes and colours, that will make the image come alive. Besides, it's much more fun!



2: Getting started

Your first step is to fire up Illustrator and then open the 3D reference.jpg file from the cover CD. Start by selecting the Pencil tool from the toolbar. The default settings are fine for the moment, so there's no need for you to change anything right now.

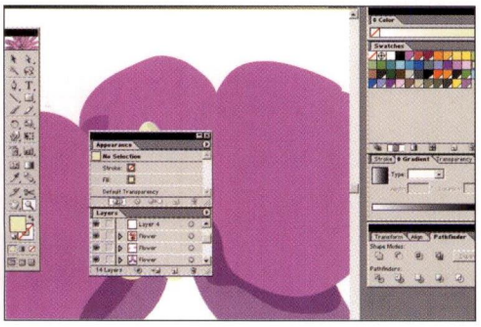


3: The basics

Draw the basic shapes that make up a flower and edit the points until the shapes are perfect. It's best to try and finish one shape before starting the next one. Considering you'll be using meshes, it's important to make the shapes perfect, or you'll find the editing possibilities will be restricted later.

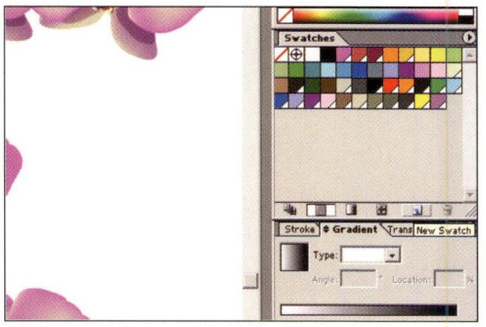
4: Layer things up

Layers are essential to a good illustration, so get in the habit of creating new layers for each major addition. We've placed the far petals on one layer, the lighter ones on a second and the entire mid-section on a third. Some basic hard shading has been applied, with the Transparency set to Multiply to reduce flatness.



5: Ready steady...

At this point you have all the basic shapes of your flower on their own separate layers. Now it's time to start preparing for when you turn the petals into 3D. To make the colouring process throughout your work much easier, it's an idea to use 'global swatches'.

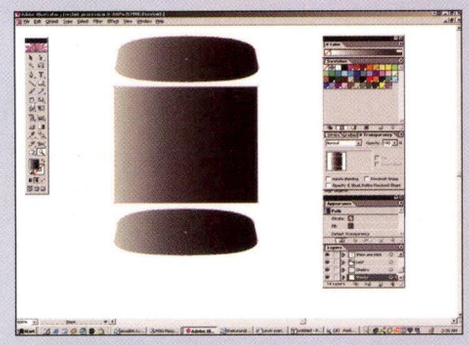


6: New global swatch

To make a new global swatch, have the object with the colour you want to keep selected. Click on the New button in the Swatch menu. Double-click on the new swatch that appears among the default swatches. Name your swatch, check the Global box and click OK.

3D EFFECTS IN ILLUSTRATOR

Creating the vase

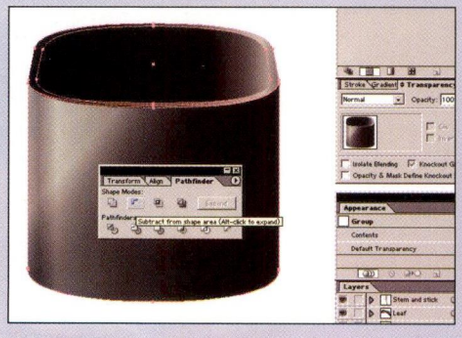


Keep it simple

The whole vase basically pops out of two simple shapes. The rest is about playing around with gradients using the Gradient tool in the toolbar, and the Pathfinder – which has its own menu – for punching holes and cutting away pieces.

Join the pieces together

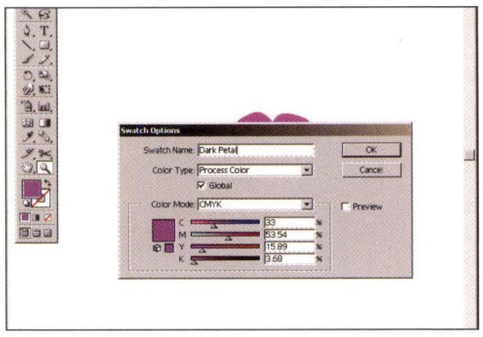
Start by joining the pieces together. Now make many duplicates of all the parts, as you'll be needing them for punching holes. By dragging the Gradient tool over a selected area with a gradient, you'll be able to vary the length and colour.



Polish it up

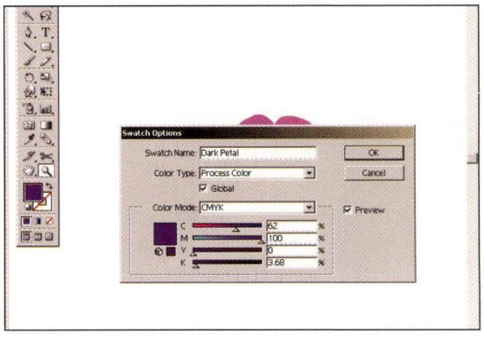
Finally, when you're happy that you have all the shapes in the right order, you can apply more gradients to make it more elaborate and complex. Duplicate the front side shape and apply a gradient with a different angle. Set the Opacity to 40%.

Continued...



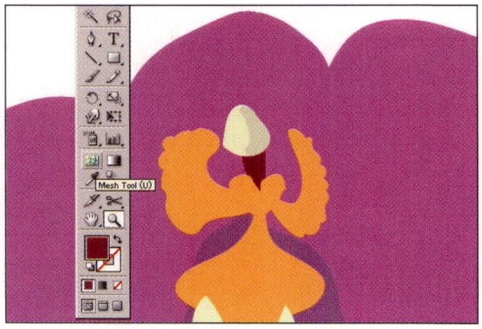
7: Repeat the process

Do this every time you have a colour you want to keep using in your picture – but try to keep the number of colours low. By double-clicking on your new swatch, you may edit it in the Options window as you wish. The objects using that specific swatch will automatically change throughout your picture.



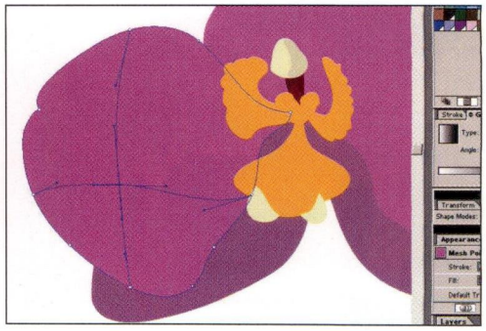
8: Global changes

Global swatches are useful when you wish to change the appearance of many objects with the same colour, without having to manually select every object for editing. This is a must-use technique for anyone creating a picture with lots of gradients or meshes.



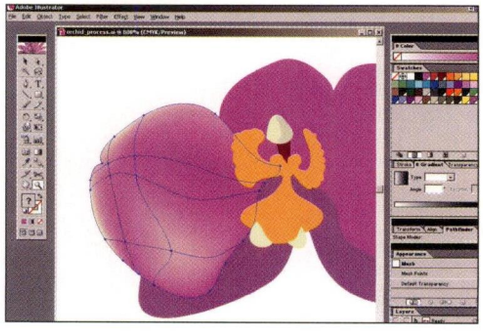
9: The Mesh tool

In addition to the global swatches, another major player in this tutorial is the Mesh tool. Although this tool can get incredibly complicated and sophisticated, we're going to be using it on quite a basic level, so this is a good opportunity to get a basic grasp of this slippery beast!



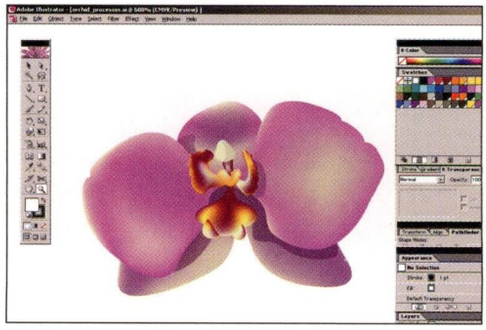
10: Meshing things up

Select the object you wish to turn into a mesh, then select the Mesh tool. Click on the object and watch a mesh appear.
Select a colour from your Swatch library for the selected point, and make the swatch Global. In this example we went for the creamy colour, which came directly from the reference orchid.



11: All in perspective

Use the mesh on every petal and really start to build up the feeling of 3D. Vary the colours according to the distance and direction of the light; this is why it helps to have a reference in front of you. We used three different globals – pink, lilac and cream – to create the impression of depth.

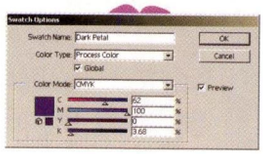


12: The mid-section

The mid-section is where you can improvise and allow your creative powers full rein. Use the same technique as for the petals, but obviously go for a lot more detail. You'll have to introduce more colours, and should have about six globals in use by now.

Going global

Even seemingly simple pictures can be made up of various elements of similar colour. This is especially true in illustrations of flowers, because you have all the different petals. We've used global swatches in this tutorial as a quick way of allocating and modifying an object's colour. If you alter the attributes of a global swatch, you will apply the changes to any object using that colour – there's no need to locate and adjust each individual object. Global swatches work best if you try and keep the number of them quite low – otherwise things become really confusing.



■ By creating global swatches of colour, we are able to quickly apply colour attributes to different objects

Quick guide to the Illustrator work area used

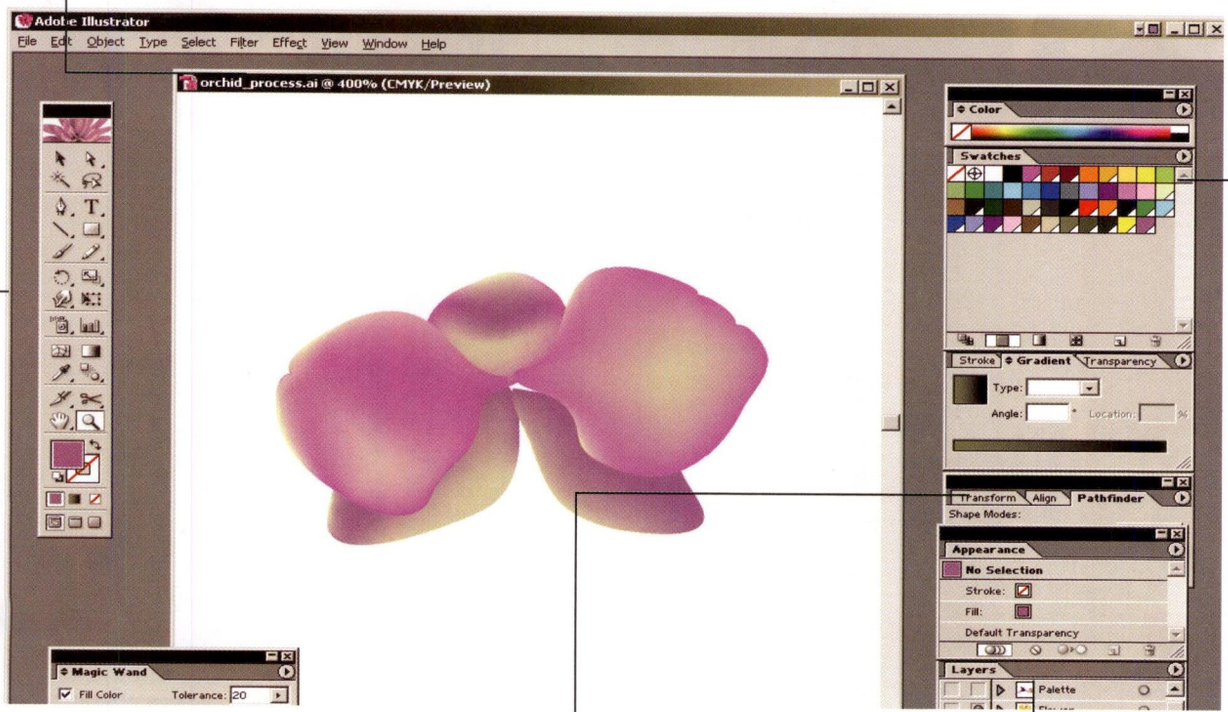
Get accustomed to your Illustrator workspace and things will be a whole lot easier

Windows

Select the desired windows for your personal work area

Swatches

Make your own modified palette consisting only of the colours you intend to use throughout your picture (for example, Global swatches)



Toolbar

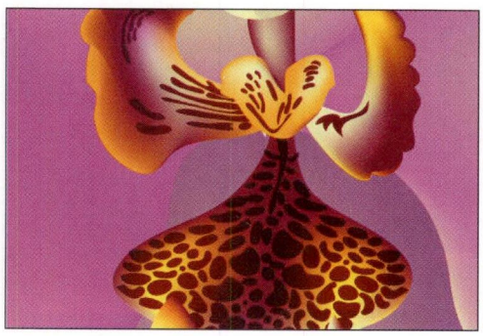
Here you'll find all the tools you will be using. In this tutorial we introduce the Mesh tool and the Gradient tool

Menus

Pathfinder and Align menus are very useful (see Creating the Vase, page 34)

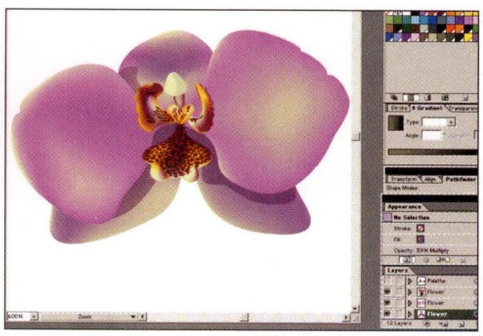
Layers palette

Keep your layers tidy and in the correct order



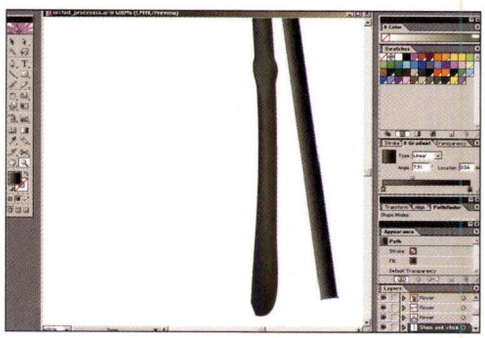
13: The small details

Add details to the mid-section with the Transparency set to Multiply. There's no new global swatch needed, as you should have a fairly dark crimson red in store already from working on the mid-section. The only thing needed is patience. Save a lot of time by copy/pasting and mirroring half the spots.



14: Hard shadows

Although the Mesh tool plays a vital part in creating a 3D effect, you should not make the mistake of underestimating the power of some shadows. Add hard shadows to the mid-section to lift the petals and give the impression of an underside.



15: Stem and stick

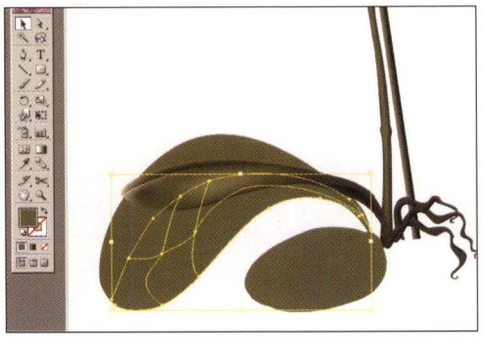
Proceed by making a new layer for the stem, supporting stick and little buds. They work in the same way as the rest of the parts, but try and make the stem as straight as possible to prevent the Mesh tool from going wild. Add three global swatches at most: dark grey, warm/cold green.

3D EFFECTS IN ILLUSTRATOR

Continued...

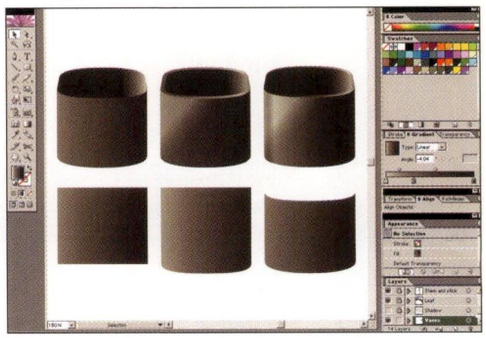
16: Fake it

You can fake branches by drawing only one, copying and resizing it, and then skewing, twisting and turning it to create the impression of eight totally unique branches. Use the Rectangle tool in the toolbar to create the stick and add a gradient to it.



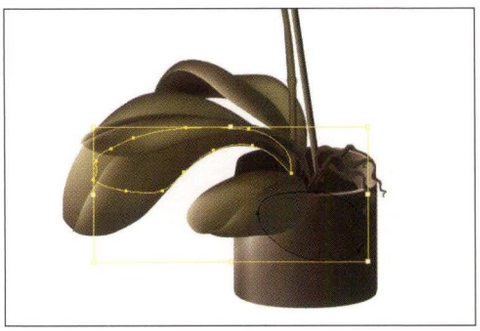
17: The leaves

Make two new layers. When colouring the leaves, you want to create a heavier contrast because they have a glossy surface and are closest to the light source. We've used a pinkish light colour to fake the reflection from the 'window'. The layer with the leaf that's further away goes behind the Stick/Stem layer.



18: The vase

That's the plant pretty much sorted. Feel free to go back to different areas and make any amendments or improvisations that you see fit. Now the time has come to turn our attention to the vase. Check out the side panel on page 34 to see how this was created.



19: Add some shadows

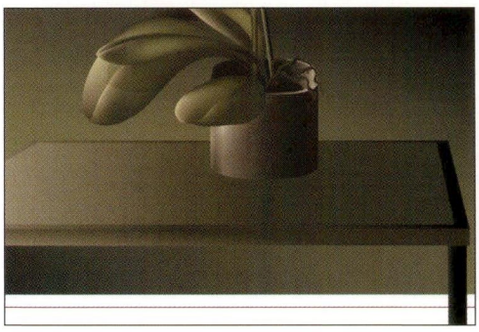
Add hard shadows to the places you see fit, again to bring out the illusion of areas being actual physical structures that have the ability to cast shadows. Therefore, the best place to put shadows is beneath other objects. These shadows are set to Multiply, with Transparency at 58%.

20: Add a little bulk

Although the main part of the plant is finished, you can add a little bit more bulk by copying the flower and skewing it slightly so that it differs from the original. Now just the background remains. We're going to give it quite a traditional treatment.

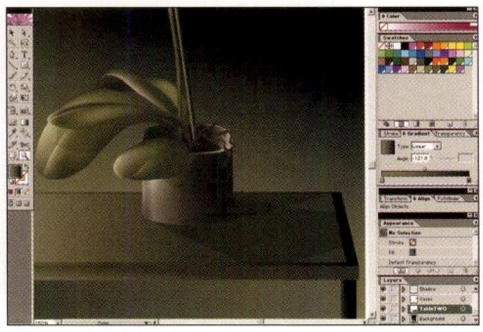
21: Keeping it traditional

We've picked a dark, stylish background to bring out the plant. The pink makes a beautiful contrast against the black. Again, we used the Gradient tool to quickly and easily alter the gradient to suit our purposes. The only thing still missing now is a table.



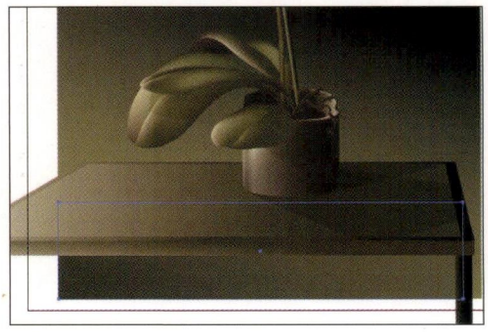
22: The table

Last but certainly not least, we need to add that table. It's got quite an Asian feel and is pretty plain and streamlined, so it won't steal attention away from the flower. It's just a series of rectangles, and to add a little volume to it, gradients were applied in the same way as to the vase.



23: Creating authenticity

You can apply thin shadows to the table with the same transparency that you used before. Make two shadows to give the impression that the light is coming from different directions. This will give an impressively authentic feel to your picture.

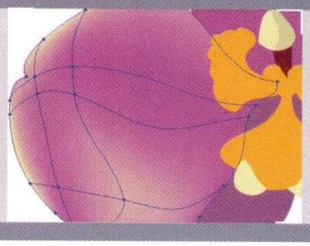


24: Perfecting your work

Don't be afraid to be picky when it comes to your work – sometimes the more paranoid you are about finishing off every detail, the better the final image will be. In the case of this illustration, we decided to add another gradient box to the background layer to simulate a shadow under the table.

Doing the monster mesh

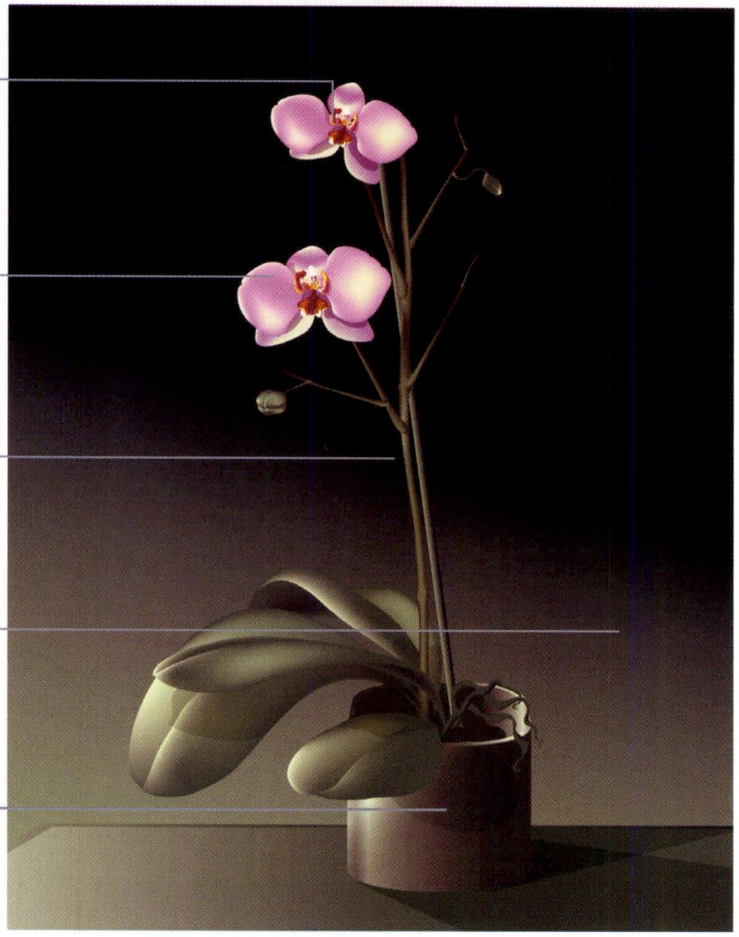
Meshes are tricky little buggers that take a little bit of practice to get used to. A mesh object allows for multiple colours to flow in different directions, giving our three-dimensional effect. You control the flow of colours using mesh points, which can be moved and altered using the Direct Selection tool or the Mesh tool. Once you've selected a point, if you then select a solid colour in the Swatches palette, the colour will change for that point. You can also change colour by dragging a colour from the Color palette over a mesh point and releasing the mouse button.



■ Meshes can be exceptionally frustrating when you first start to use them, but once you get the hang of how they work, you'll find them delightful!

Getting the 3D look without a 3D program

Gradients and an eye for detail combined to create this great image



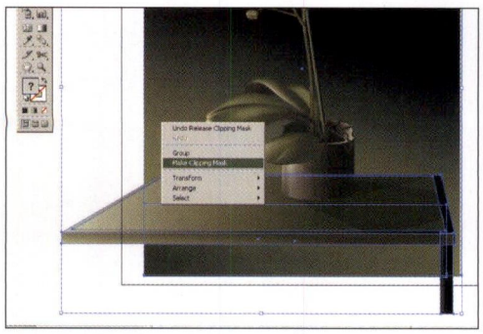
Don't forget the shadows
Although the 3D quality of this image mainly comes from the gradients, never forget the power of a humble shadow. By adding a few well-placed hard shadows, you can really help lift elements

Petal power
By using a reference – ideally a still life – you can see how light affects a particular area and then use this in your illustration

Use your eyes
We created the stem and leaves from observation, and then used gradients to make them look three dimensional

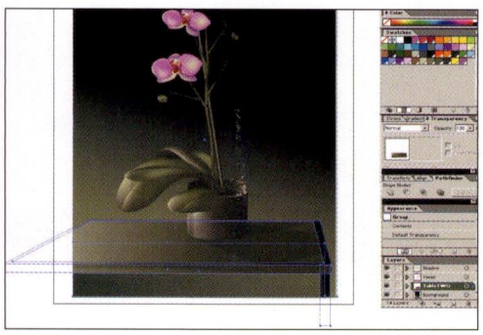
Simple but vital
The background and table are very simple, but they help add a sense of dimension and feeling that the orchid actually occupies real space

Vase attacks
The vase is nothing more than a series of rectangles, but the shading makes it come alive



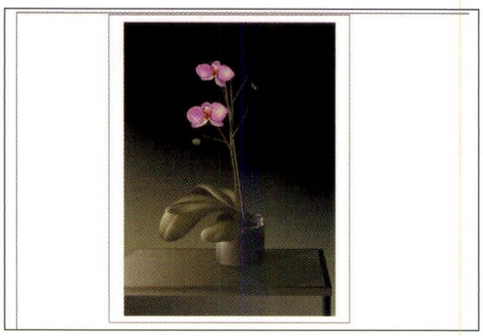
25: Finishing off

If there happens to be something sticking outside the borders of your picture, just apply a clipping mask to it. You'll have to do this with the table. Make a rectangular shape as large as your picture, and with it selected, choose the objects that you want to clip.



26: Carry on clipping

The next step is to right-click and then select Make Clipping Mask from the menu. Making clipping masks enables you to work more freely, even outside the limits of your final picture, and it's a very good skill to get comfortable with early on.



27: 3D summary

Let's recap on what will make a picture 3D, whatever media you're using. There are a few basics to keep in mind: lighting, shading and perspective. The tools and tricks that will help you use these guidelines in Illustrator are mainly gradients, meshes and just plain spiffy colouring!

[writer: **Roxana Vazquez** | hardware: **Pentium 3 PC** | software: **Illustrator CS**]

CREATE THE METALLIC LOOK

Discover the secrets of how we re-created the perfect reflections and shiny metallic chrome of this Chevy Impala

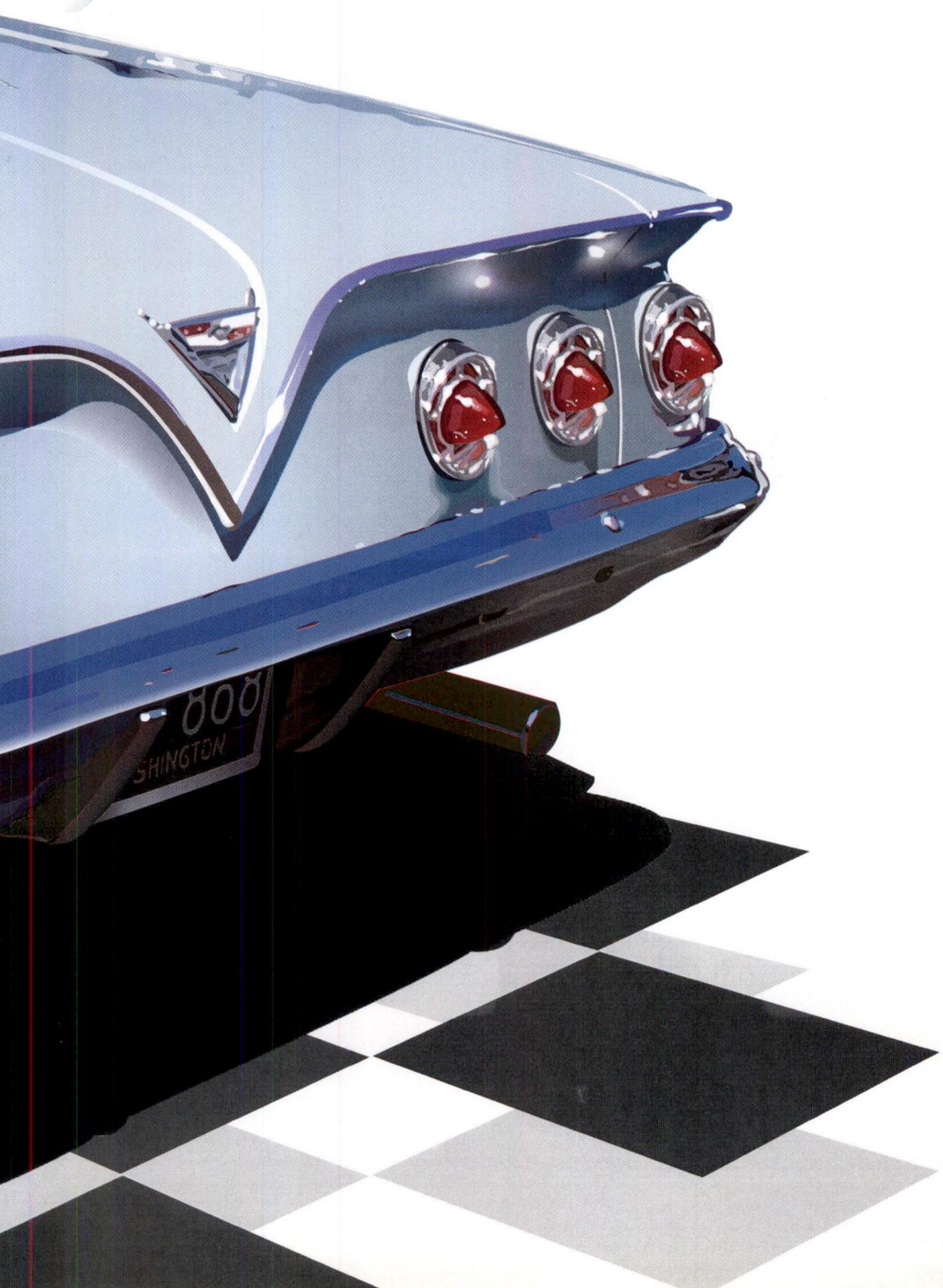
WEB RESOURCES

The source picture of the Chevy Impala used in this tutorial came courtesy of J R Goleno. An eager photographer, some of his photos are featured on the excellent stock.xchng site. If you'd like to see some of his other work, pay a visit to **www.sxc.hu/browse.phtml?f=profile&l=rockpuppet** or email him at **justin.goleno727@dolphin.csuci.edu**.

YOUR GUIDE

ROXANA VAZQUEZ hails from Argentina, where she studies graphic design at the University of Buenos Aires. A recent convert to digital art – she only really began to take a real interest in it last year – Roxana has fallen in love with the digital way of working. Her favourite digital mediums are vector art and digital photography. To see some of her other work, visit **http://un-divine.deviantart.com/**

Reflections and the suggestion of light bring illustrations to life. In this tutorial, you'll learn how to produce metallic effects and reflective surfaces using simple techniques



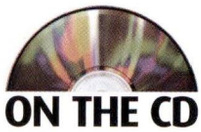
Working with reflective surfaces – in this case metallic chrome – always adds a realistic touch to vector work, and it's really important to emulate them in the right way so you don't lose this valuable slice of realism.

Before you vector something that's metallic, you must understand the way the light behaves on it, which means learning how an object is affected by the light. A good rule of thumb is to think about light in terms of 'hit zones'. The hit zone is where light hits the surface and is the brightest part. This hit zone then slowly fades out until it is absorbed by the colour surrounding it. The main thing is to go for is detail like flares, sheens and all kinds of little reflections.

When applying this kind of details, you'll have to spend a lot of time working with the Zoom tool. Zoom in close to do the vector work, but then zoom out frequently to make sure everything works together. If you always work in a close-up view, your perception will play tricks on you, and something that looks unpolished or messy on close inspection will blend together to produce realistic reflections as soon as you zoom out. Getting the detail is obviously important, but being faithful to the reference image is also crucial when it comes to getting stunning results.

If you're working from a photo, as we are here, try and stick to using similar or exact colours because it will help you create realistic light. This is especially important if you're just starting out, because the colours you choose for the gradients have to give the illusion of light and reflection. Pick the wrong hues and you risk your metal losing credibility.

But worry not, because this tutorial will show you how to achieve realistic chrome effects using a photo of a lovely shiny car as a starting point. You'll find a semi-vectored version of the vehicle on the cover CD, so all that's left is to open up the photo reference and start buffing up that chrome!



ON THE CD

Impala.ai
Impala.jpg

CREATE THE METALLIC LOOK

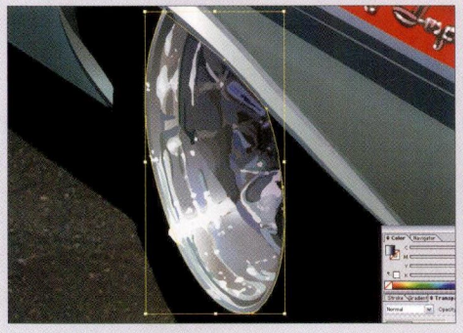
Chrome wheelcaps

Start with the base

Leave the photo reference behind the already vectored car. In a new layer, trace the whole rim with the Pen tool and fill it with a linear gradient between a dark grey and white, with an angle of 25 degrees. Remove the outline and proceed.

Shines and flares

Hide the layer made in step one and create a new one on top. With the Pencil tool, trace every individual flare, sheen or colour zone in the photo in the same way as you'll do with the bumper. Now fill them with a similar or identical colour to the reference.

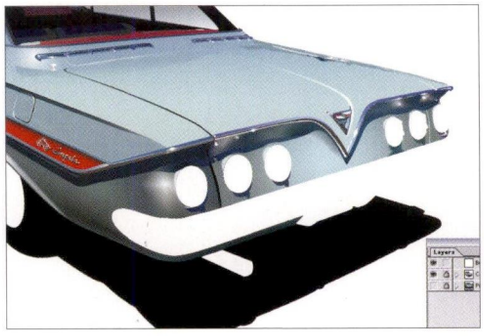


Integrating tones

To finalise, we'll create a shape with transparency so we can integrate and match the tones. Copy the path with the gradient created in step one, and paste it in a new layer on top. Modify the gradient and change the grey to a blackish blue. Go to Windows>Transparency>Opacity and enter 20%.

Step-by-step: master chrome and reflections

When it comes to cars, a nice shiny bumper and chrome can make an image sing

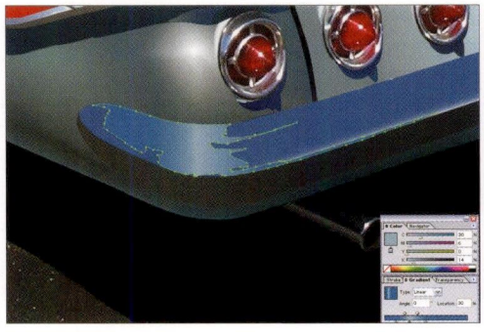


1: Get started

Open up the impala.ai file from the cover CD. Make the Picture layer visible, which will allow you to use the photo as a guide for completing the shiny areas. Start by creating a new layer from the Layer menu, which you will call 'Bumper'. From now on all new layers will be stored in sublayers of 'Bumper'.

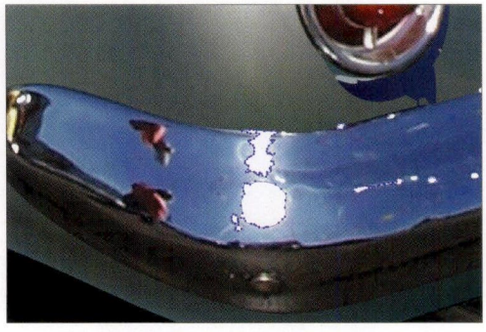
2: Bump and grind

The bumper is divided into two main colour schemes (blue and grey). With the Pen tool and a bright colour, start to outline each main part individually in different shapes. Remember to close the shapes so that colour can be added later on.



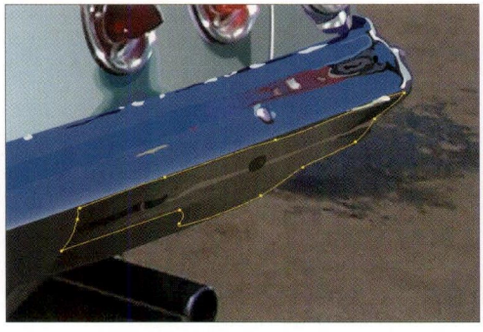
5: Lighter zones

To shape the lighter parts of the bumper, double-click the Pencil tool to see its Preferences window. Change the Fidelity to 1 pixel. Click OK. Trace the lighter parts and apply a linear gradient between blue and light blue. Use settings of: Angle: 0%, Location: Blue: 14%, Light Blue: 30%, Blue (again): 50%.



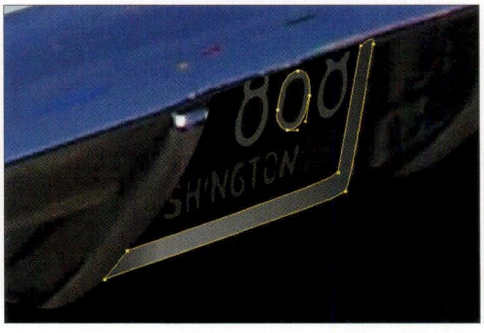
6: Make flares and shines

Now focus on the flares and reflections on the bumper. There are many different shapes of different colours that create the bumper reflections. Trace all the little shapes of the same colour – in this case just the white ones. Remember to use a fill colour without a stroke, and zoom in to 800x or more.



9: Reflections on the lower zone

Focus on the lower part of the bumper. It also has dark shadows and light reflections. Trace and colour in the same way as you did in steps six and seven. It makes sense to always keep your layers in order and hide them as needed. This makes working with the photo reference easier.

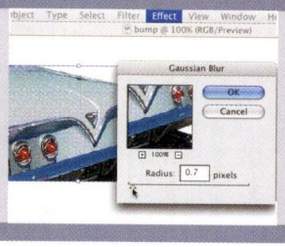


10: Licence plate

Use the Pen tool to make the visible part of the licence plate. Hide the other layers so you can have a clearer vision of it. Outline the borders, numbers and letters, and then fill them according to the colours of the reference. Use a linear gradient of two greys in the border of the plate, as shown on the image.

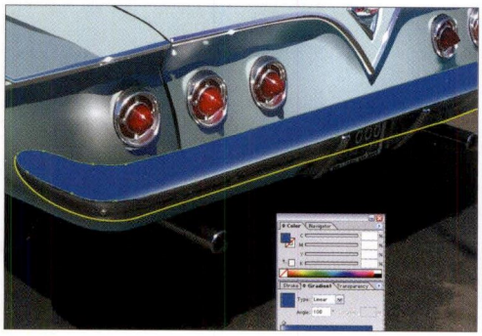
Using the Blur effect

Another option given by Illustrator for achieving a better reflection is to use the Blur effect. Select the shape you want to blur, go to Effects>Blur>Gaussian Blur and in the window always select a radio value below 1 pixel. If you like the result you get, you can use this effect on all the reflection zones of the bumper, mud flap and lights, using whatever pixel site you think works. Experiment and you'll soon get a feel for when it works.



■ *The Blur effect is an excellent way to help add realism to your reflective surfaces*

Chrome tail lights

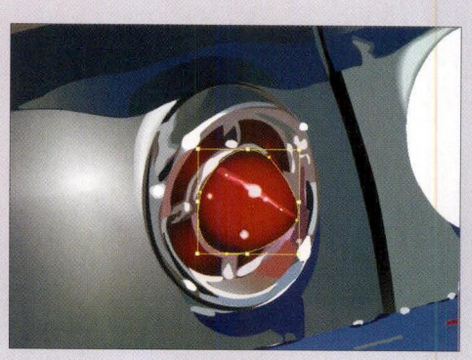


3: Colour the upper part

With a linear gradient of white and blue, colour the upper part of the bumper. Always keep in mind that all the colours must be faithful to the reference. Keeping the shape selected, reach out to the Gradient menu and enter these parameters: Angle: 108°, White Location: 0%, Blue Location: 17%

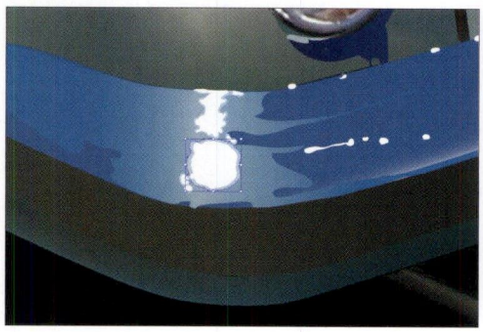
4: Colour the lower part

Now we will focus on the lower part of the bumper. Start by choosing a dark grey similar to the reference and then create a radial gradient with a lighter grey. Once again, go to the Gradient menu and enter these settings: Dark Grey Location: 53%, Light Grey Location: 100%.



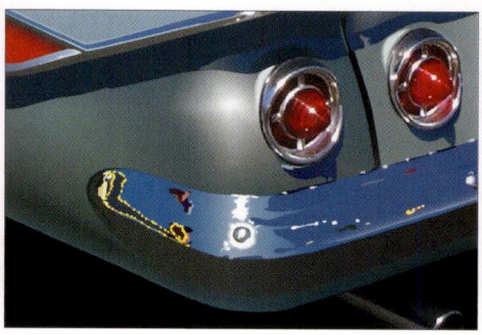
First group of lights

For the chrome parts of the tail lights, use the same technique as for the bumper, tracing by colours. For the red zones, use radial gradients between red and embroidered, as shown on the image. For the bright reflections and flares, create as before.



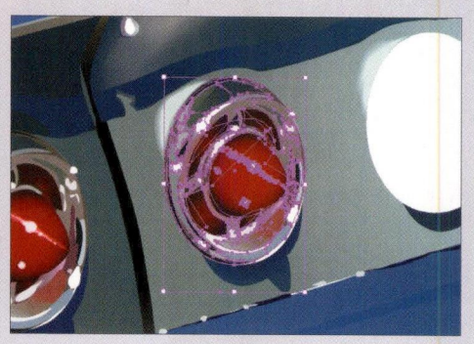
7: Blending some reflections

Select one of the reflections created before, and copy and paste on the back of it. Enlarge the copy so it stands out from the back and fill it with a blue colour from the same range as the bumper, but brighter. Now the reflections don't look as though they are cut out. Repeat with all the reflections.



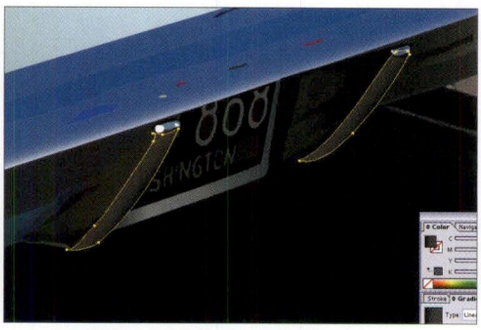
8: Upper part details

Repeat steps six and seven with the other colour reflections found on the bumper. Trace, colour, and if necessary blur them so they don't look cut out. Focus on little details; the greater the detail that's vectorised, the more realistic the bumper will look. Do the same with the rest of the bumper.



Duplicating tail lights

Once you've created one tail light, select all the shapes that compose it, then copy and paste them on a new layer. Select all the shapes from the new tail light, modify the size so it fits on the spot of the second light and place it. Repeat the same step for the third light from the left.



11: Licence plate surroundings

Trace the chrome parts surrounding the licence as before, but use a linear gradient of grey and black in the main zones (marked in the image). Use these settings: Type: Linear, Angle: 143%, Location: Black: 0%, Grey: 100%. Work the rest of the bright parts as before, selecting them according to colours.

12: Exhausted

The last thing we need to do is create the exhaust pipes, which is done by selecting the brighter areas coming out of the black shadow of the car. Follow the same technique as before. Once finished, just zoom out and you'll see that the illustration has now got a healthy bit of chrome realism.

Final group of lights

Since the perspective and lighting of the second group of lights (on the right) is different from the other, re-create one of the tail lights as you did in step one, then copy and modify so you can quickly make the remaining ones (as in step two).

[writer: **Charlene Chua** | hardware: **Pentium PC** | software: **Illustrator**]

GRADIENTS WITHOUT MESHES

You don't have to tackle meshes to get glorious gradients, as we prove here

YOUR GUIDE

Charlene Chua is an illustrator based in Singapore. She works mainly in Adobe Illustrator, and her work has appeared in a number of magazines including the Singapore *FHM* and *CLEO*, *Asian Diver* and Singapore Airline's *Silver Kris* magazine. For more information on Charlene and her work, visit her Web site: **www.CharleneChua.com**

Sick of flat vector-based graphics but can't get the hang of gradient mesh? This tutorial demonstrates how to create great gradients – all without the aid of that pesky Mesh tool

ON THE CD

cchua-dca-start.ai
cchua-dca-done.ai

Imagine this: you've just spent the afternoon making a really neat picture in Illustrator. You're about to print it out, when a little voice tells you that perhaps, if you threw on some of that gradient magic, it'd make the picture even cooler. Common sense says, 'Use the Gradient Mesh tool! That's what it's for!' So you start clicking all your paths using the tool... and about half an hour later you're about ready to kick your monitor out of sheer mesh-ridden frustration.

Take a deep breath. Relax. Great as Gradient Mesh is, unless you really need to get a highly detailed, realistic or 3D-like vector piece done, your illustration can be easily livened up without having to tackle any meshwork at all.

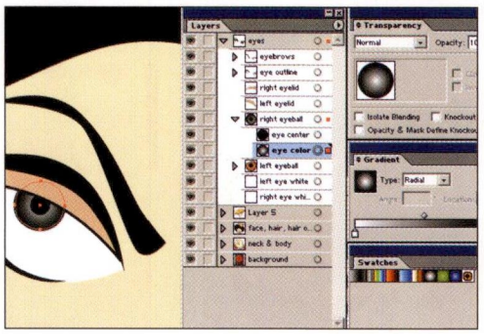
In this tutorial, we'll explore how vector-based artwork can be enlivened with the use of simple gradients and transparency effects. We'll learn a little about blends, and create an opacity mask from a black-and-white gradient. Finally, we'll see how gradients can be used to make simple symbols, which can then be used to make more interesting shapes. With a bit of experimentation and practice, you'll come to see how easy it is to employ these simple and quick techniques in your own work. ■

Step-by-step: using gradients in your work

Add life and texture to your vector work with some deft application of gradients

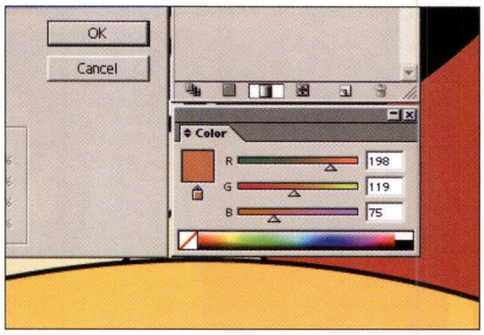
1: Flat colour image

Here is the illustration without any gradients. In this tutorial, we will make use of the Gradient tool, gradient swatches and transparency effects to make the picture more interesting. We will also apply a blend, create an opacity mask, and use simple symbols to create hair ornaments.



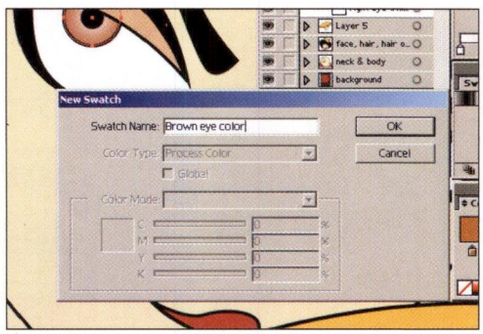
2: Making a radial gradient

Let's get started. Load cchua-dca-start.ai and select Eyes> Right Eyeball>Eye Color. In the Gradient palette, choose Radial under Type. This changes the fill colour of the eye to a radial gradient of black and white. Black, however, is not a nice eye colour, so we'll change it in a moment.



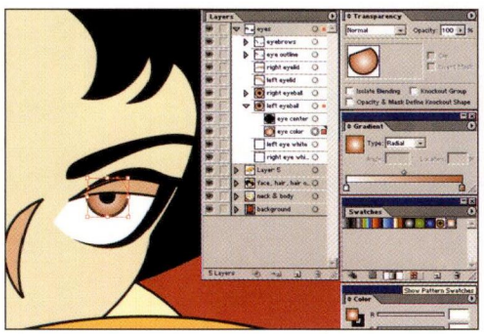
3: Brown is the new black

Click on the little black square in the gradient slider in the Gradient palette. Open up the Color palette. Set it to RGB, and adjust the sliders to brown. Or enter R: 198 G:119 B:75. That should change the little black box in the gradient slider to the same brown.



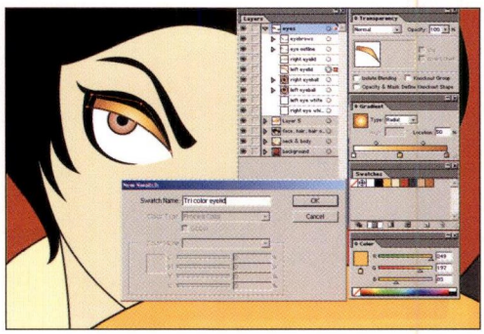
4: Saving a new gradient swatch

You've just created a new gradient. New gradients can be saved to your gradient swatches collection. To save your new gradient, click the little arrow in the top right corner of the Gradient Swatches palette and choose New Swatch. Name your gradient 'Brown eye' and hit OK.



5: Apply a gradient swatch

Saved gradient swatches can be reused easily. Select the layer Eyes>Left Eyeball>Eye Color. With this path selected, go over to the Gradient palette and select the 'Brown eye' swatch you just created. This will automatically change the left eye to the same colour as the right eye.

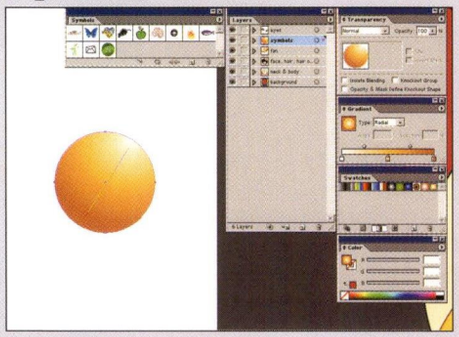


6: Multi-colour gradients

Gradients can have more than two colours. Select Eyes>Left Eyelid. Select the 'Brown eye' swatch. Holding down the Alt key, click and drag the white square to the middle of the gradient slider bar. Click on the new square, and repeat step three to create a tri-colour gradient.

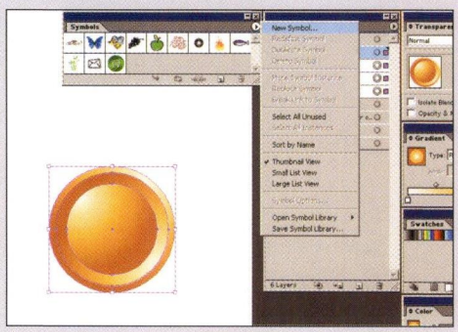
GRADIENTS WITHOUT MESHES

Save time with symbols



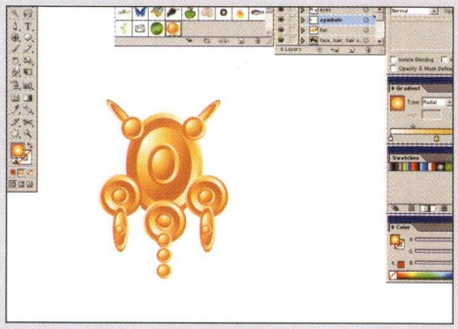
Making simple symbols

Symbols are a great time-saver. For this illustration, we will use a simple circle-based symbol to create decorations for the girl's hair. Create a circle, then select the tri-colour gradient from step six, and use the Gradient tool to adjust the gradient accordingly.



Adding more circles

Duplicate the circle and reduce it to 80%. Use the Gradient tool to adjust the gradient by changing the start and end points. Repeat with a third and final circle. Select all three circles and click the arrow in the top right of the Symbols palette. Select New Symbol.



Repeat and rejoice

The symbol can be used repeatedly by dragging and dropping it out from the Symbols palette. It can be stretched, rotated and combined to form more interesting shapes. Combined symbols can be saved as new symbols by selecting all parts and hitting New Symbol.

Continued...

7: Face details

Interesting shadows can be made with gradients and transparency effects. To create a shadow for the face, start by selecting Face>Face Shadow. Fill it with your 'Brown eye' swatch, but change the swatch type to Linear. Click and drag with the Gradient tool to adjust the gradient appropriately.

8: Going multiple

Open the Transparency palette. Click the drop-down box containing 'Normal', and choose Multiply instead. Change Opacity to 60% to soften the colours. Notice how the white disappears due to the Multiply setting. Different transparency settings give different effects – experiment to see the results.

9: Fanning out

Blending literally joins two or more objects together by creating a blend of colour between each object. This is perfect for the semi-circular shape of the fan. To begin, draw triangular strips along the fan outline. Make sure these strips are longer than the height of the fan.

10: Strip detail

Select the strips you just drew. Remove any strokes, and then create a blend (Object>Blend>Make). You can also select the individual shapes and blend them together one by one. Blended objects can be edited individually after blending by selecting individual pieces and amending them as desired.

11: Blend in the right place

Select and duplicate Fan>Fan Outline, and move this above your blend. Select the duplicate layer and your blend, and hit Object>Clipping Mask>Make to get your blend within the fan shape. Change the transparency for added effect (we changed ours to Hard Light).

12: Fade into the background

A black-and-white gradient can be used to create an opacity mask, which can then be used to make an object look as though it's disappearing. In the background layer, create a large rectangle and apply a black-and-white linear gradient to it. Move it above Background>Sun.

Go back to the default

As you become more confident with gradients, you'll start to play about with the angle of the gradient to get the exact effect you want. However, once you've selected an object and altered its gradient angle, any new objects that you draw will inherit this altered angle. To stop this, you need to 're-zero' gradient angles. Deselect all objects and fill with None by pressing 'I' on the keyboard. Now when you next choose a gradient, you'll notice that all settings are back to the default.

Tools and palettes used in Illustrator CS

Below is an overview of the tools and palettes used to create the illustration

Layers palette

Handy for keeping track of different shapes and layers. Individual shapes can be named and grouped accordingly for easier access

Gradient tools

Gradient tools can be accessed easily from the toolbar. From the top left: Gradient mesh, Gradient tool, Blend/Autotrace tool

Symbols palette

Create and store new symbols with this palette. Symbols help drastically reduce work time by reusing common elements

Transparency palette

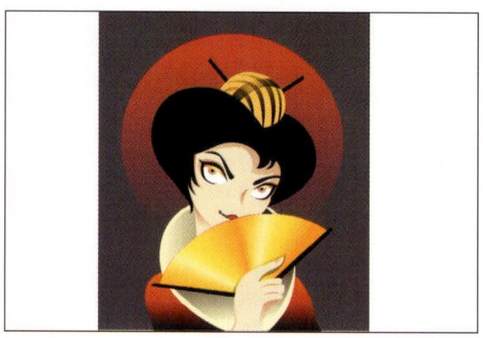
This affects the transparency modes of a selected object to create different colour effects. It can also be used to create opacity masks

Gradient palette and gradient swatches

Gradients created here can be saved as gradient swatches. Selecting a saved swatch makes it editable in the Gradient palette

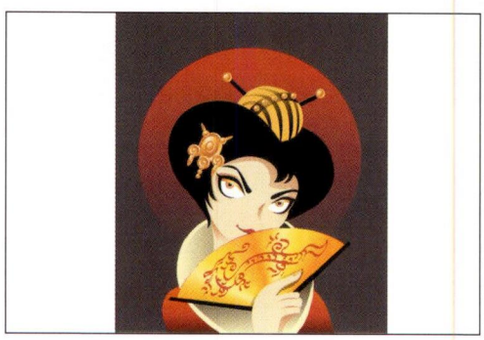
13: Opacity masks

Select the black-and-white rectangle and the Sun sub-layer. In the Transparency palette, click the triangle in the upper right corner. Choose Make Opacity Mask. If you need to adjust the mask, you can click its thumbnail in the Transparency menu to reselect it and make your adjustments.



14: More gradients

Using the techniques mentioned, continue to add gradients to the picture. In this example, we added shadows to the neck and hands in the same way as the face shadow (step seven), changed the colour of the kimono (step six) and later set the strokes to None to remove the black outlines.



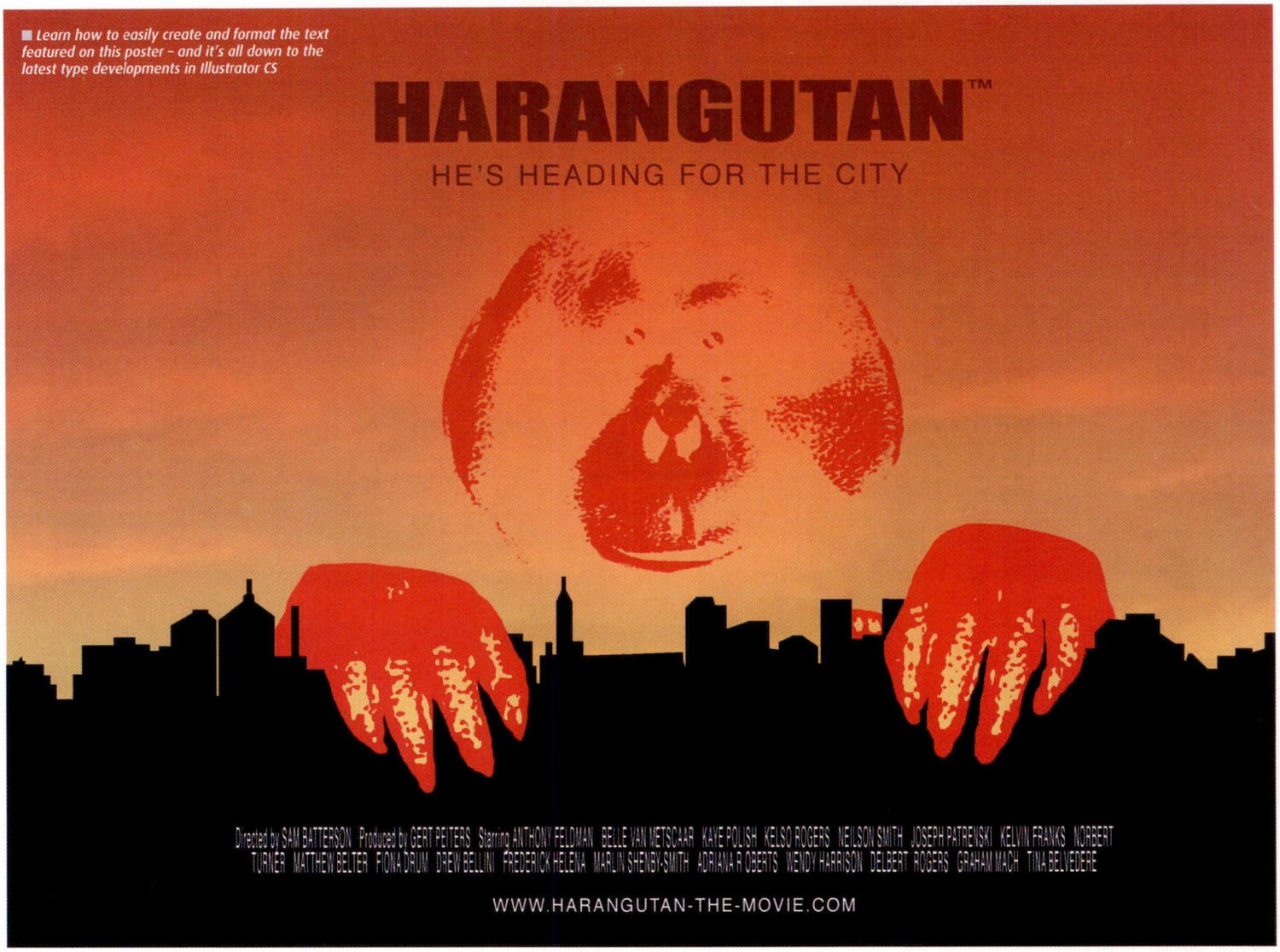
15: Final details

Symbols can be useful when putting the finishing touches to a picture. We added a hair ornament and golden hairpin bulbs with the help of a symbol created earlier (see side panel on page 44). A dragon motif was also added to the fan with the aid of the Brush tool.

[writer: **Jerome Turner** | hardware: **1.4GHz G4 Mac** | software: **Illustrator CS**]

TEXT AND ILLUSTRATOR CS

Illustrator CS includes a bundle of new text features. Our movie poster tutorial shows how they can be used creatively in everyday design work


Learn how to easily create and format the text featured on this poster – and it's all down to the latest type developments in Illustrator CS
HARANGUTAN™
HE'S HEADING FOR THE CITY
Directed by SAM BATTERSON Produced by GERT PEITERS Starring ANTHONY FELDMAN BELLE VAN METSCAAR KAYE POLISH KELSO ROGERS NEILSON SMITH JOSEPH PATRENSKI KELVIN FRANKS NORBERT TURNER MATTHEW BELTER FIONA DRUM DREW BELLINI FREDERICK HELENA MARLIN SHENBY-SMITH ADRIANA R OBERTS WENDY HARRISON DELBERT ROGERS GRAHAM MACH TINA BELVEDERE
WWW.HARANGUTAN-THE-MOVIE.COM

ON THE CD

HARANGUTAN.ai
HARANGUTAN_FINISHED.JPG

In computer design, there are certain things that you just don't do. For example, conventional wisdom dictates that Photoshop is the tool for creating short typographic treatments, and desktop publishing applications like InDesign or Quark are better suited to brochure or magazine layouts. But with Illustrator CS's treatment of text, you have to ask yourself whether these rules still stand, and in the movie poster tutorial we're about to work through, you'll get a chance to explore the various features and decide for yourself.

If you've ever used Style Sheets in Quark, or even Cascading Style Sheets with HTML, you'll soon be at home with how Illustrator CS applies the same concept. In the tutorial we'll show how to preset a collection of parameters for your text as a style (colouring, size, tracking, etc) and then apply that style to selected text. This saves you time if you decide to change the style of a chunk of text in the future.

As is the case with other text-heavy applications, Illustrator CS also allows us to lay out type in boxes, containing rows and columns as necessary. We'll show how this is useful when dealing with a large block of text in the poster design.

Finally, we'll also discover a few of the finer text details offered by Illustrator CS – how we can now adjust kerning and tracking, the Glyphs palette and the font previews in the Font menu. By the time we reach the end of the tutorial, we're sure you'll be convinced that there's a lot more to working with text in Illustrator once you start exploring the features – features that might just change your approach to typography and desktop publishing altogether. ■

CREATIVE PRIMER

Reading Style palettes

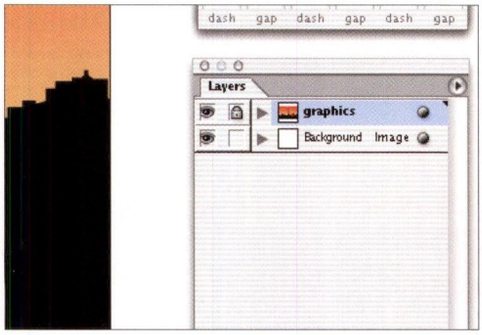
Look at the Character Styles palette. If there are no other styles, any text you enter in Illustrator uses the default Normal style. If you then reformat your typed text, this overrides the Normal style and is indicated in the palette with a '+' sign. In fact, if you use any style to format your text and then make changes to that text, you are overriding the style and you'll see that '+' sign. To format the highlighted text according to the original style again, just click the style in the palette. This can be very handy – if you're not sure how a piece of text is currently formatted, simply place the cursor within the text and check in the relevant Styles palette.

YOUR GUIDE

JEROME TURNER is a multimedia designer and writer. He has written several books on design and video production for publishers such as Friends of ED and regularly contributes to a variety of magazines. He is the creator of a number of Web sites, including **www.dogsincars.co.uk** and works with a variety of clients, such as City University and the BCC. Visit his site at **www.jerometurner.co.uk** or email him at **info@jerometurner.co.uk**.

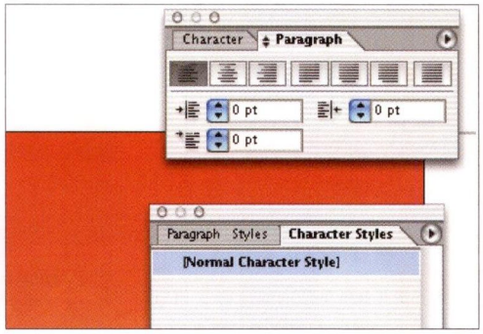
Step-by-step: using styles in illustrator cs

Setting up styles in Illustrator is an excellent way to quickly format your text



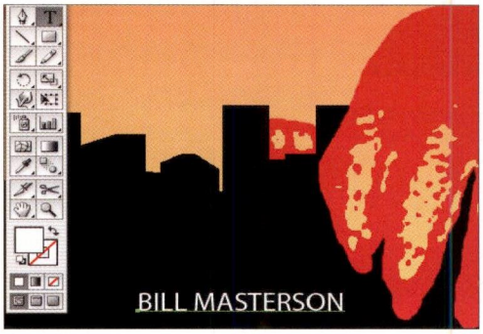
1: Lock the graphics

Open the harangutan.ai file from the cover CD. The artwork on the Graphics layer should remain exactly the same throughout, so in the Layers palette, click to the right of the eye logo so it's locked – you'll see the padlock. Now we can start working with text safely.



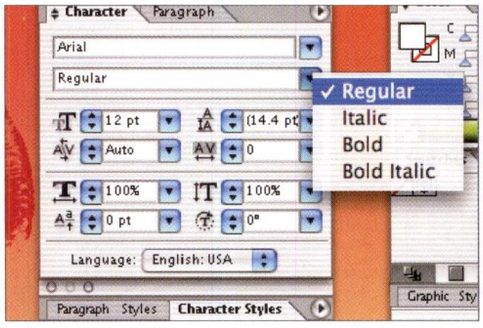
2: Open the Styles palettes

Make sure you have the Character and Paragraph palettes open and grouped together. Group them by grabbing by a palette's title and push it into the other. Open the Character Styles and Paragraph Styles from the Window>Type menu, and if they're not already, group these as well.



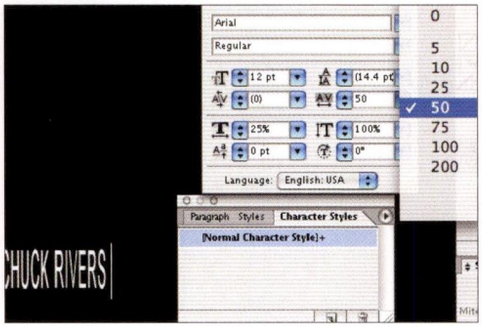
3: Enter some text

To start with, we need to format text for the large body of text, which will list cast, director, producer, etc. Create a new layer to work in and then, using the Type tool, enter a random name in capitals on top of the black area at the bottom of the image.



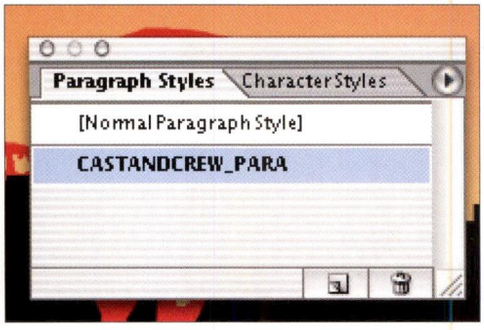
4: Set the colour and font

Now highlight the text using the same Type tool and pick white from the Color palette so it will show up on black. In the Character palette, choose Arial from the Font drop-down menu, and set to Regular in the drop-down just below. Set Text Size to 12pt to start with.



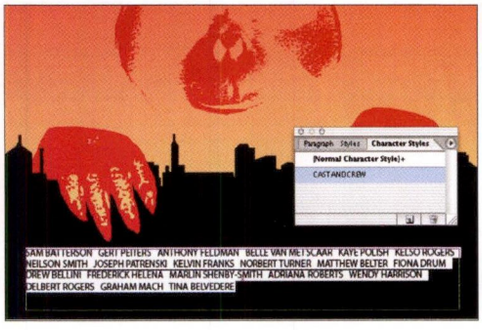
5: Edit the style

This type of 'cast and crew' info on a poster is typically very tall and narrow to get maximum text into the smallest space. Select the text again, and in the Character palette, reduce the Horizontal Scale (width) to 25% and set the Tracking (space between letters) to 50.



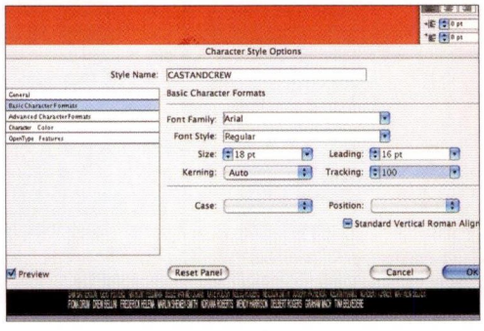
6: Define Character Style

Having formatted the text, make sure it's highlighted again, and in the Character Style palette, click the Create New Style button at the bottom. 'Character Style 1' appears in the palette. Double-click the style there, and in the Character Style Options window, change Style Name to 'CASTANDCREW'.


Paragraph Styles
Character Styles
[Normal Character Style]+
CASTANDCREW
SAM BATTERSON GERT PEETERS ANTHONY FELDMAN BELLE VAN MEYSCAAR KAYE POLISH KELSO ROGERS
NEILSON SMITH JOSEPH PATRENSKI KELVIN FRANKS NORBERT TURNER MATTHEW BELTER FIONA DRUM
KREW BELLINI FREDERICK HELENA MARLIN SHENEFF SMITH ADRIANA ROBERTS WENDY HARRISON
DELBERT ROGERS GRAHAM MACH TINA BELVEDERE

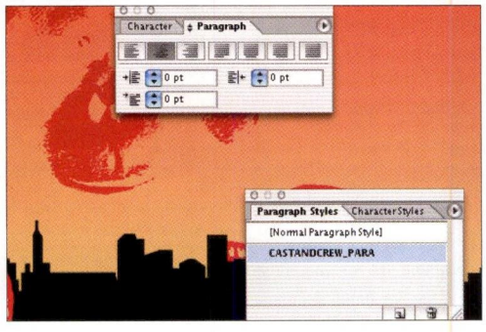
7: Enter cast and crew names

Delete the text we've entered so far, and using the Type tool, draw a wide marquee shape (click and drag) to type names into. Enter around 20 names, select all the text, and click CASTANDCREW in the Character Styles palette in order to apply that style.



8: Tweak the style

Hmm, the text is too small and narrow to read. Double-click the CASTANDCREW style in the palette, and then change Size to 18pt, Leading (spacing between lines) to 16pt and Tracking to 100. In lower case text, add text within the paragraph to show who directed, produced, etc the film.



9: Complement Paragraph Styles

Select all the text again, and in the Paragraph palette click the second button to centre align the paragraph. In the Paragraph Style palette, create a new style as before, naming it 'CASTANDCREW_PARA'. Now any time you want to format the block of text, you can use these styles to do so!

TEXT AND ILLUSTRATOR CS

Using the Type features

Illustrator CS's Type features are useful in any design where text appears. Find out how the Styles and Glyphs palettes can be used, along with a few other useful extras

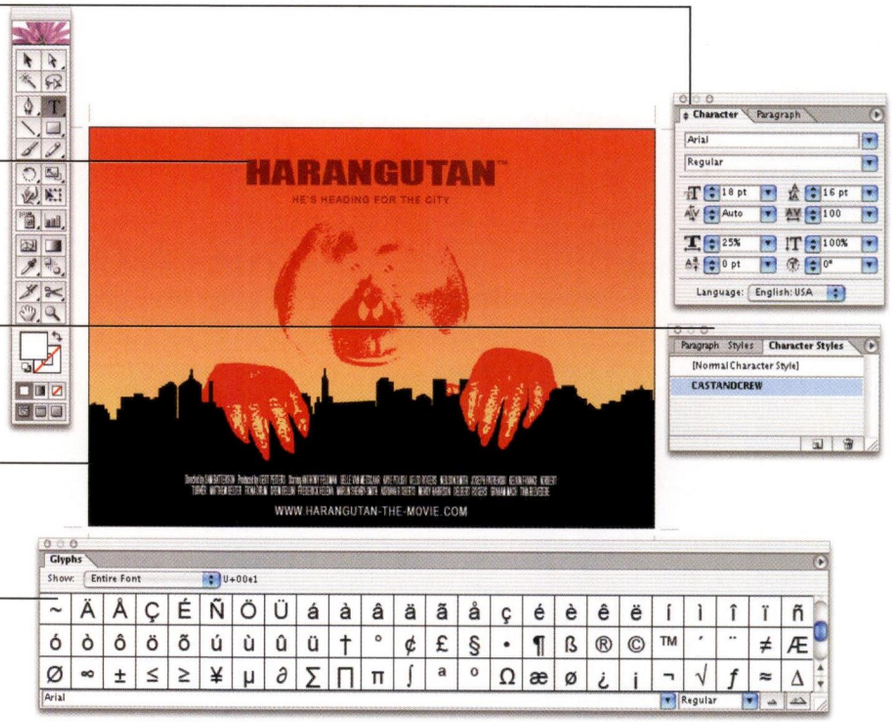
Character and Paragraph palette
When formatting small pieces of text, you don't always need to create a style. Use the Character palette to format the text, or Paragraph palette to set its appearance in the paragraph

The heading
CS's extended optical Character controls help us to set out text exactly as we need it. In this case, the film's title needs to be bold, well spaced and most importantly, legible from a distance

Styles palettes
However, if you format text a particular way and would like to apply it to other areas of the image, create a style that can be used as and when

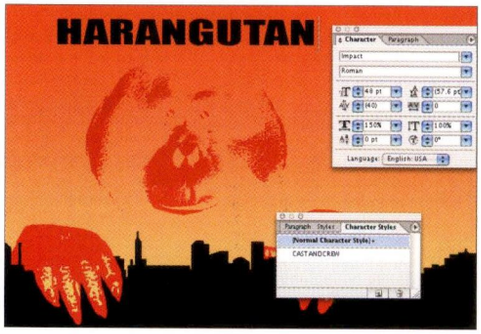
Using styles
If you're formatting text in a certain way and want to format other text in the same way, using a style helps keep everything looking the same

Glyphs palette
Sometimes you know a certain glyph or symbol can be typed from a font but don't remember which keypresses create it. Rather than hammering randomly at the keyboard, try the Glyphs palette



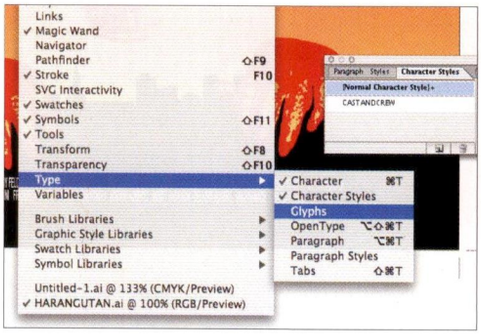
Step-by-step: more illustrator cs text tricks

Get even more from your text using the Glyphs palette, Every-Line Composer and setting rows and columns



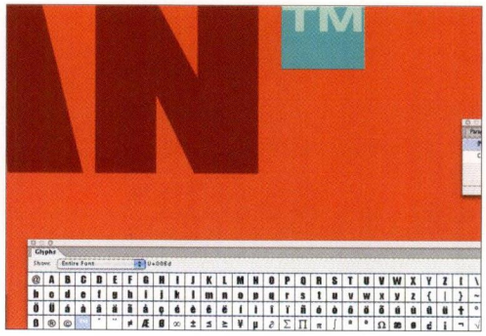
1: Enter the heading

First, check you have the Normal styles selected in the Style palettes. Then, near the top of the poster, enter the film's name in block capitals – 'HARANGUTAN'. Because we're only formatting the title like this there's no need to set a style – just change the size and font, etc in the Character palette.



2: View the Glyphs palette

Glyphs are the symbols that collectively make up a font – it's easy to type letters and numbers, but some glyphs that need certain keypresses to create them can be tricky to find. However, in Illustrator CS we can go to Windows>Type>Glyphs to open the Glyphs palette.



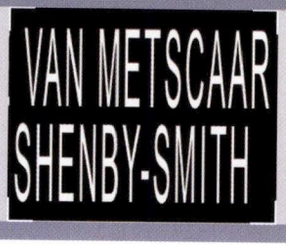
3: Enter a glyph

Set the Type tool cursor for a new piece of text, and then look for the ™ logo in the Glyphs palette. If it's easier, change the thumbnail sizes using the buttons in the bottom right. Click the ™ thumbnail to type it, make it smaller and then reposition if necessary.

CREATIVE PRIMER

Why the long typeface?

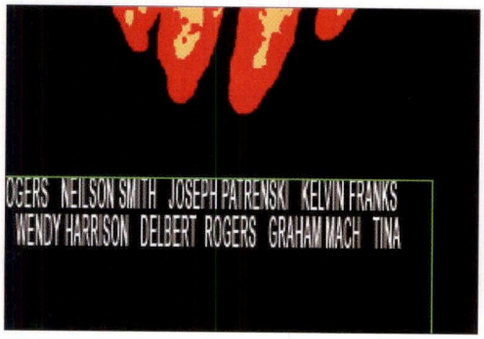
If you've ever looked at the 'cast and crew' list on a movie poster, you may have noticed it's in a very narrow, tall typeface. But this isn't just so designers can get the maximum information into the smallest space, listing everyone involved. It's the industry norm for actors, directors and producers to stipulate in their contracts that their name must appear on a poster at least one-half the height of the film's title – hence the height. However, there is no such rule governing the width, so it can be as narrow as the designer likes!



Why do cast and crew credits have to look like this? It's all down to ego and contractual obligations

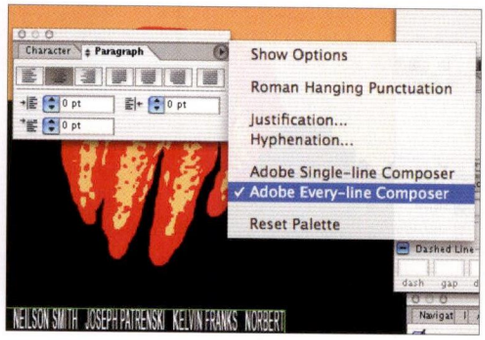
WEB RESOURCES

You'll find plenty of poster designs at: **www.movieposter.com** and **www.alyon.org/generale/theatre/cinema/affiches_cinema** – it's interesting to see how posters get 'translated' into foreign languages in that second link. Or how about some books? *Vintage Hollywood Posters* by Bruce Hershenson, or *Science Fiction Film Posters* by Tony Nourmand are good ones to try. Finally, you'll find more Illustrator-type tutorials by searching **http://studio.adobe.com** site.



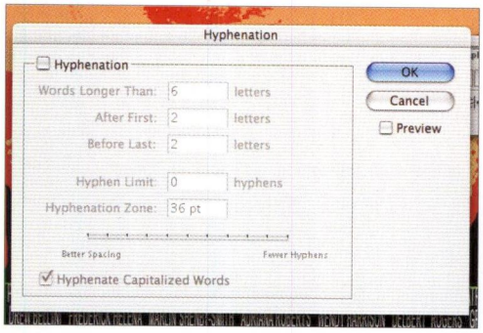
4: The old method

If you selected the block of text containing the cast and crew information in the days before Every-Line Composer existed, the lines of text wouldn't reach the edges of the box. This is because the line breaks, hyphenation and spacing would fall victim to the old Single-Line Composer method.



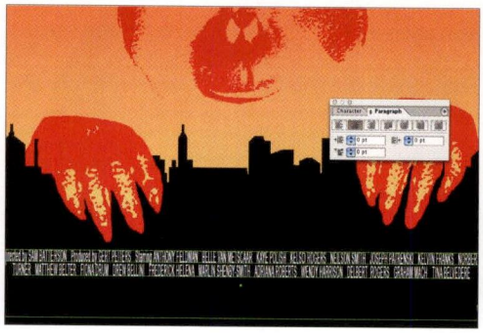
5: Enter Every-Line Composer

With the box selected (you don't need to select the text itself), go to the Paragraph palette and click the arrow to open the menu there. Select Adobe Every-Line Composer, and notice how the text is respaced to make better, more accurate use of the box space.



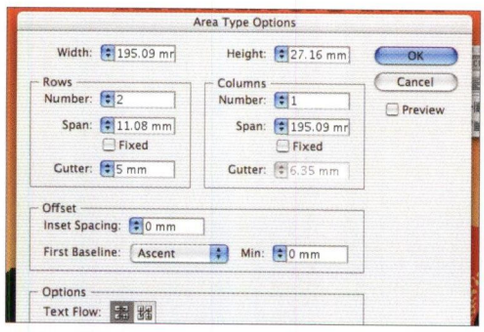
6: Setting hyphenation

Because we're dealing with proper nouns here that shouldn't be broken in half by hyphenation, from the same menu select Hyphenation. The pop-up window shows a whole set of hyphenation controls for CS, but you just need to untick the Hyphenation box to turn it off altogether.



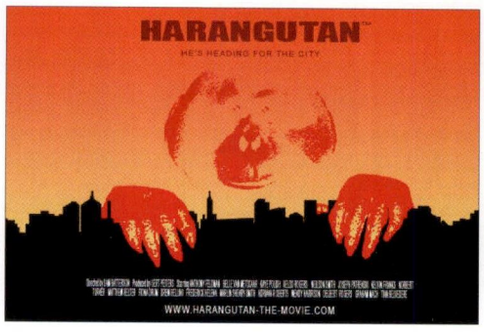
7: Working with rows

Using the Move tool, select the paragraph of cast and crew information again. There is some extra information to add, but that doesn't relate to the cast and crew members credited, so we'll create an extra row within the paragraph to hold this particular information.



8: Make two rows

With this paragraph selected, go to Type>Area Type Options, and in the pop-up window change Rows from 1 to 2. Also, reduce the Gutter to 5mm – this is the space between the two rows. You'll probably guess as you change the number of rows, that 'Span' shows the height of each row.



9: Enter more info

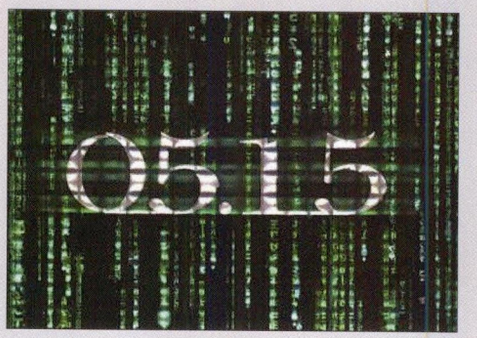
If the cursor isn't already in the second row of your paragraph box after hitting OK, place it at the end of the last word and hit Return until it is. Type in information such as the studio or the film's Web site address, perhaps using a different font formatting.

Movie poster styles

Grand Prix du Festival de Paris 1999
Grand Prix de la Critique Internationale Mostra de Venise 1998
Grand Prix du Jury Festival Premiers Plans Angers 1999
Sacrement rejouissant
Affreusement macabre, salement comique, mechamment brillant
Optimum
Franchement attachant
Premiere

Text-heavy posters

This poster for *Orphans* has its text in rows, which can be achieved using the Rows and Columns features. Create a paragraph of text and then go to Type>Area Type Options to set up as necessary. Buy this poster from **www.alyon.org/generale/theatre/cinema/affiches_cinema.**



Illustrative text

Don't forget how type can be used to convey the identity of the film – not just in its content, but also in its appearance. So experiment with different formatting techniques. The *Matrix Reloaded* poster (available from **www.movieposter.com**) is a good example of this.

Letting images speak

If the imagery associated with the film is powerful, let the graphics tell the story. If you're not contractually obliged to credit stars and crew on the poster, do they really need to go on there? This poster for *Star Wars* (you can buy it from **www.movieposter.com**) works even without loads of text.

[writer: **Sam Chivers** | hardware: **Athlon PC** | software: **Illustrator CS**]

USING PRIMITIVE SHAPES

YOUR GUIDE

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Learn how to make this malevolent monster using Illustrator's default shapes – you don't even need to be able to draw!

No matter how complex a vector image is, at some point in its creation it will most probably have made use of primitive shapes such as the Ellipse, the Rectangle, the Star or the Polygon.

These shapes are the fundamental elements of Illustrator, and if you're new to the application, learning their virtues will provide you with an indispensable ally and prove to be a gateway to fertile and ultimately rewarding new creative fields. Primitives are your friends!

So, over the next five pages we're going back to basics to look at Illustrator's more fundamental techniques for creating images. Using the primitive shapes and the Pathfinder tools, we are going to learn how to create this grumpy sea monster on the left. No drawing skills required – yes that's right, it really is that easy!

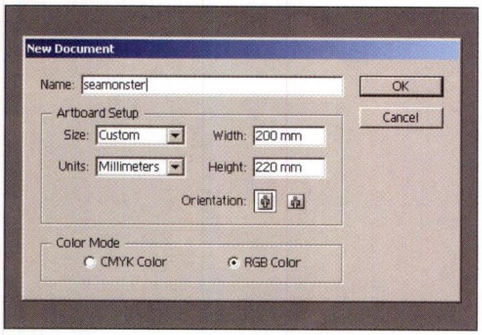
We'll kick off by using the Ellipse tool and the Pen tool to create the octopus, then we'll look at how to join different shapes together using the Pathfinder tools.

Along the way we'll cover some techniques for getting real mileage out of the primitives, such as applying the Envelope Distort feature and the distort filters such as Pucker & Bloat and the Zig-zag tool to achieve some really fluent results.

To follow this tutorial you don't need to be an expert at Illustrator, although a basic knowledge of how the Pen tool works and how to make basic shapes will help.

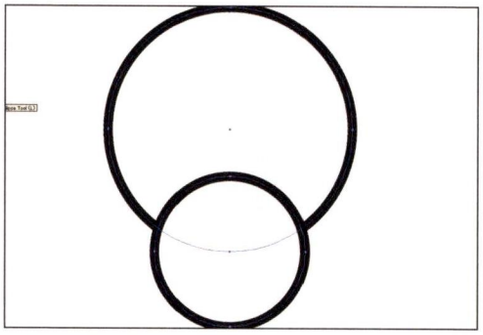
Step-by-step: creating a monster

Find out how simple shapes such as the Ellipse and Rectangle can create a ferocious-looking creature



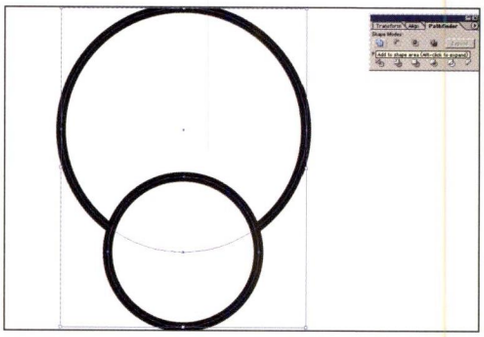
1: Kick off with a new document

Start off by opening a new document through the File>New menu. In the dialog box, name the document 'Seamonster'. Set the width to 200mm and the height to 220mm, make sure that Color Mode is set to RGB and click OK. We will begin by creating the octopus.



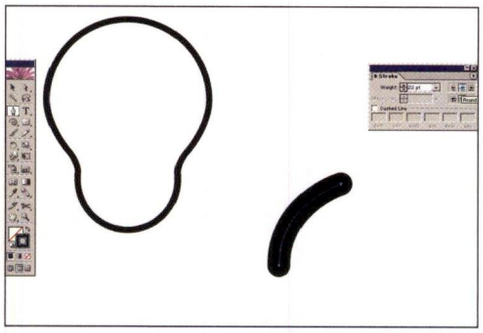
2: Creating the octopus head

Select the Ellipse tool (L) and create a circle 54mm x 54mm (clicking on Artboard will display the Values box). Set the stroke width to 6pt. Create a smaller circle of 33mm x 33mm. Position it over the large one so the centre point sits on the lowest point of the other.



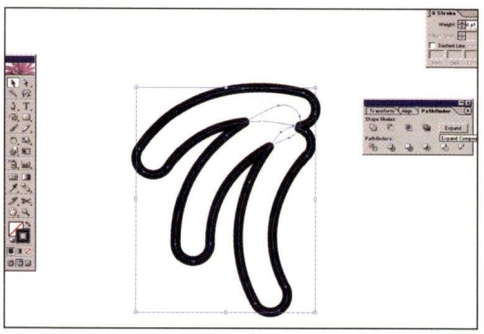
3: Consolidate the shapes into one

Select both shapes with the Selection tool (V). Go to Window>Pathfinder to open the Pathfinder palette, and click on the Add to Shape Area button (hover the cursor over the buttons to display their function). Now click the Expand button. This will consolidate the two shapes into one.



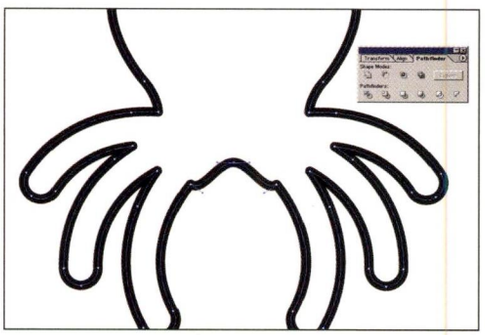
4: Round the corners with a filter

With the shape selected, go to Filter>Stylise>Round Corners. In the dialog box enter a value of 6mm and click OK. With the Pen tool (P) create a curved stroke. In the Stroke palette set the weight to 22. Click on the Round Cap button on the left of the palette.



5: Create the many tentacles

Go to Object>Path>Outline Stroke to convert the stroke to a shape. Copy and paste two duplicates. Using the Selection tool (V) and the Rotate tool (R), position the shapes over the top of each other. Select all three shapes then consolidate them into one as explained in step three.

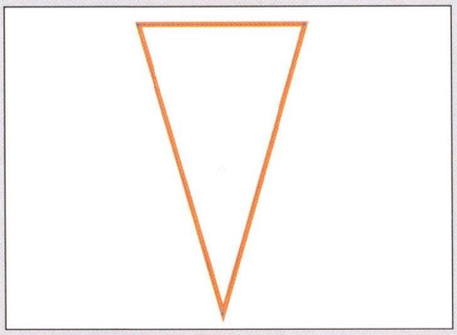


6: Arrange the shapes

Copy and paste the shape. Go to Object>Transform>Reflect, set the axis to 'Vertical' and the angle to 90, then click OK. Arrange all the shapes over each over then consolidate as in step five. Use the Direct Selection tool (A) to pull the points around the crotch area into position.

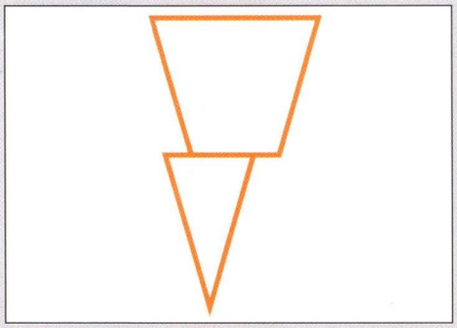
USING PRIMITIVE SHAPES

Create the lightning



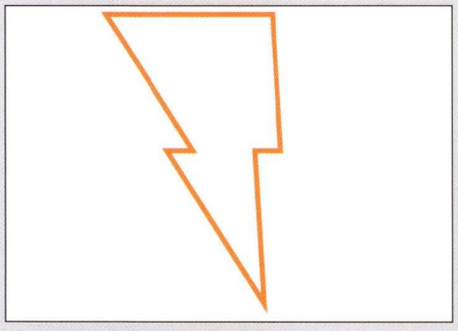
Make a triangle

Select the Polygon tool, and while scribing, reduce the number of sides to three by hitting the down cursor key a few times. Press Shift in order to keep the shape rigid and true. Then use the Rotate tool (R) to flip the polygon 180 degrees.



Bisect and divide the shape

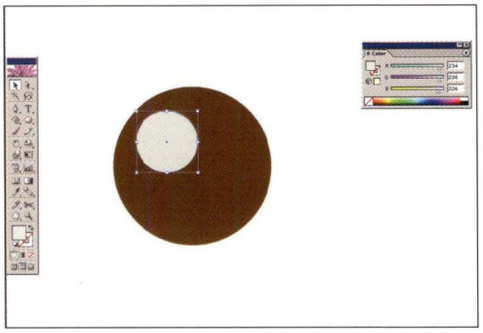
Select the Line Segment tool (\) and click and drag a horizontal line which divides the triangle; keep Shift pressed to keep it staight. With the line selected (but not the shape below), go to Object>Path>Divide Objects Below. Select the top half and drag slightly to the right.



Slant it with the Shear tool

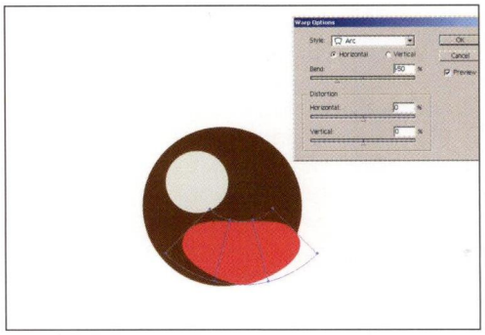
Select both shapes and consolidate into one using the Add to Shape Area button in the Pathfinder palette. Select the Shear tool – this can be found by clicking and holding on the Scale tool. Click and drag to the left while holding Shift to give the shape a dynamic slant.

Continued...



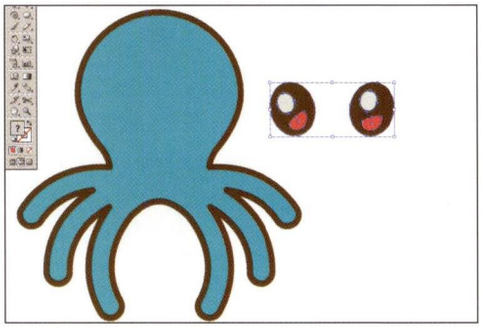
7: Create an eye with an ellipse

Using the Ellipse tool (L), create a circle 18mm x 18mm. Set the stroke to 'None' in the toolbar and give the fill a dark colour using the Color palette. Now create a smaller circle and place it in the upper left corner. Give this one a lighter shade.



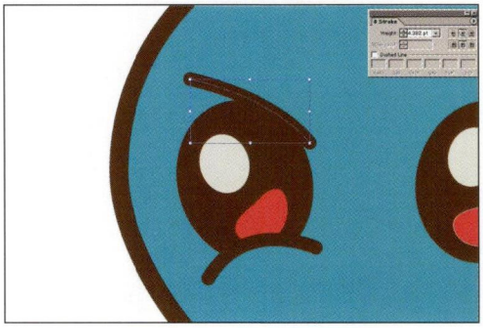
8: Create an evil glint

Now create another circle and made it a dark red. Then with it still selected, go to Object>Envelope Distort>Make With Warp. In the dialog box which appears, set the style to 'Arc' and the bend to -50. Click OK. Scale and rotate the shape to fit within the eye.



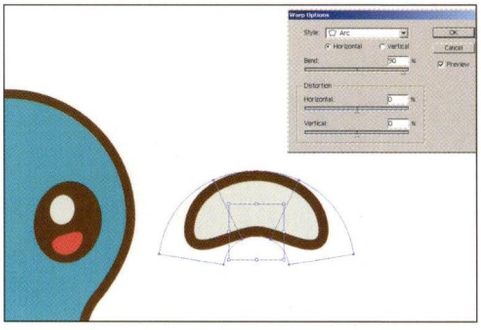
9: Create another eye from the first

Select the shapes with the Selection tool (V), and using the handles, squish them into an ellipse and rotate about 20 degrees. Go to Object>Group to group them together. Copy and paste a duplicate and then rotate about -40 degrees. Now place them over the body created earlier.



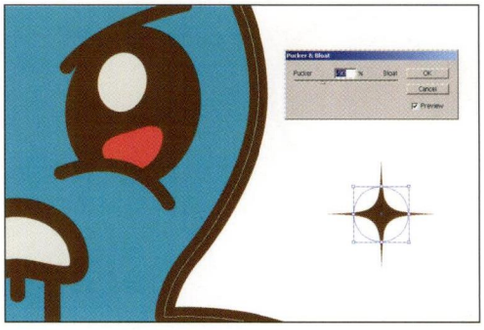
10: Inject with some anger

Using the Pen tool (P), create a single curved stroke above the eye. Set the fill to 'None' and the stroke to the same as that of the body shape. Create another single stroke below the eye, but this time give it a fill colour the same as the body shape.



11: Create a downturned mouth

Create an ellipse of about 12mm x12mm with a stroke of 6pt. Go to Object>Envelope Distort>Make With Warp. Set the style to 'Arc' and the bend to 90%. Click OK. Now go to Object>Expand. Click OK in the box. Scale down to about the width of one of the eyes.



12: Dribbling vision of doom

Use the Pen tool (P) to create some drips. Select the mouth shape and send it to the front (Ctrl/Apple & Shift &]). Now create an ellipse with a dark fill and no stroke, then go to Effect>Distort & Transform>Pucker & Bloat, set the value to -90% and click OK.

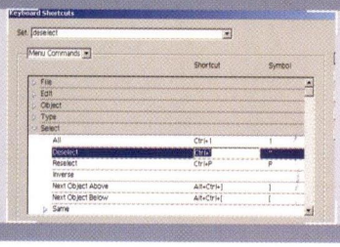
Keep it short

Here are some handy key commands to bear in mind when following this tutorial:

Deselect: This will save loads of time. Memorise the Deselect key command Shift & Ctrl/Apple & A. If this is awkward for you, change it. Simply go to Edit>Keyboard Shortcuts.

Smartguides: These guides can be your best friend or your worst enemy. Indispensable and labour saving, they can help the designer produce clean precise vectors. Activate them either by going to View>Smartguides or hitting Ctrl/Apple & U.

Grouping objects together: A neat way of keeping things simple. Select the objects to be grouped and hit Ctrl/Apple & G.



■ *Leave the menus alone – shortcuts are the way to go*

Use the primitives to create more complicated shapes

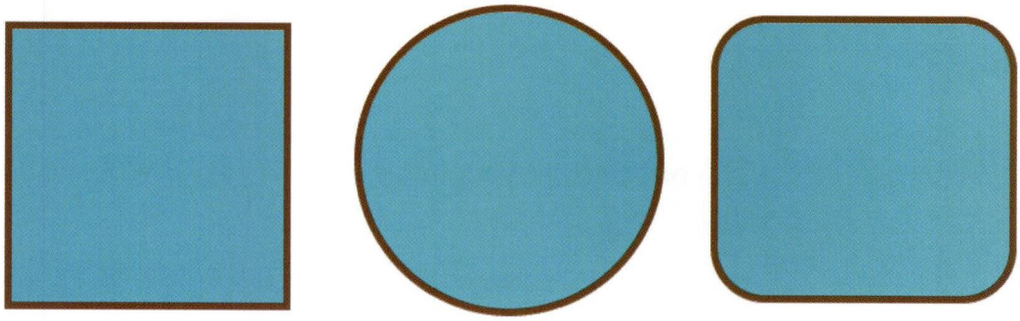
Making good use of Illustrator's primitive shapes can be a simple and effective launchpad for creating striking images

The Ellipse

As with all primitives, hold Shift while scribing to retain perfect proportions. Hold Alt to scribe from the centre

The Rectangle – as basic as it gets

The building block of Illustrator, with the Rectangle what you see is what you get. Second only to the Circle in its simplicity

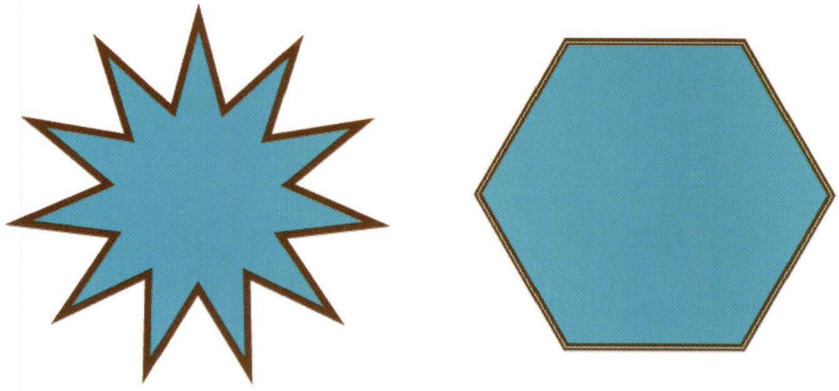


Create lozenge shapes using the Rounded Rectangle tool

An invaluable and flexible primitive; hit the up and down cursors while scribing to alter the radius of the corners

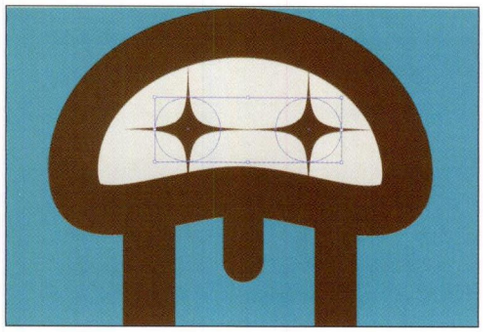
Stars don't have to have only five points

While scribing, use the up and down cursors to alter the number of points; to adjust the inner radius, keep Ctrl/Apple pressed



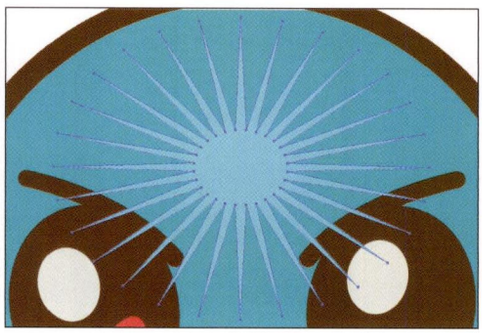
Create precise hexagons with the Polygon tool

Use the Polygon tool to create hexagons to octagons; use the up and down cursors in order to adjust the number of sides



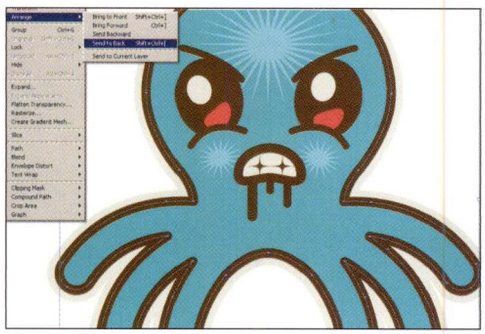
13: Create some clenched teeth

Copy and paste a duplicate, and then position it next to the original. Group the two objects together (Ctrl/Apple & G) and scale them down so that they fit inside the mouth shape. Click and hold on the Ellipse tool in order to select the Star tool.



14: Highlight with the Star tool

Create a star shape. To adjust the number of points, use the up and down cursor keys while scribing; to adjust the length, press the Ctrl/Apple key while scribing. Set the stroke to 'None' and the fill to a slightly lighter shape than that of the body colour.

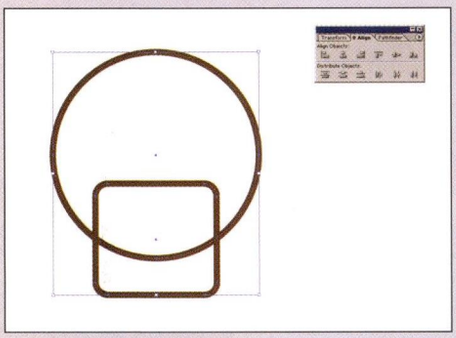


15: Outlining the octopus

Copy and paste a duplicate of the body shape, and place directly over the original. Set the stroke to a light shade of about 15pt, then send to the back by going to Object> Arrange>Send To Back. Select the whole octopus and group together (Ctrl/Apple & G).

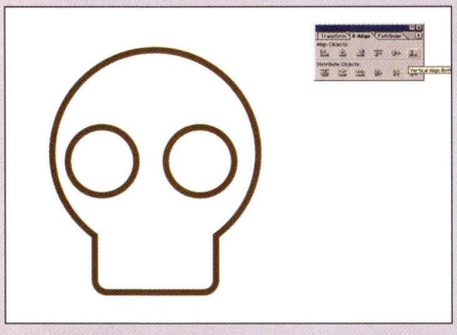
USING PRIMITIVE SHAPES

Align and Pathfinder



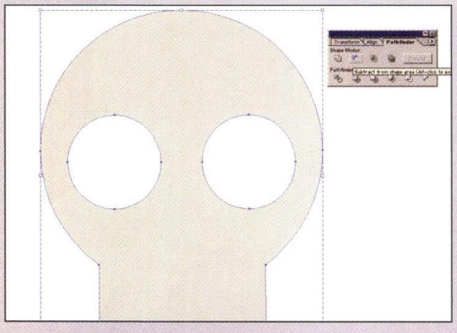
Make the basic elements

Create an ellipse about 12mm in diameter, holding Shift while scribing to retain proportions. Next, create a rounded rectangle to sit over the top. Select both shapes, and in the Align palette click Horizontal Align Center. Now consolidate into one shape in the Pathfinder palette.



Align the eyes and consolidate

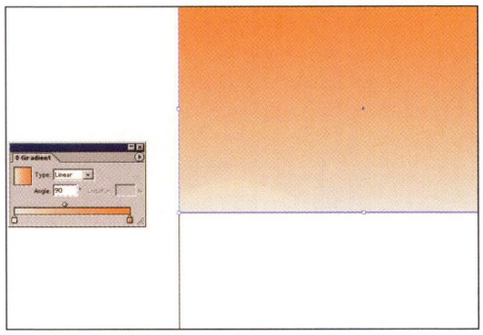
Now create a circle for one of the eyes, copy and paste a duplicate and place both shapes over the main head shape. With both selected, click on the Vertical Align Bottom button in the Align palette. Now consolidate them into one shape in the Pathfinder palette.



Cut out the eyes

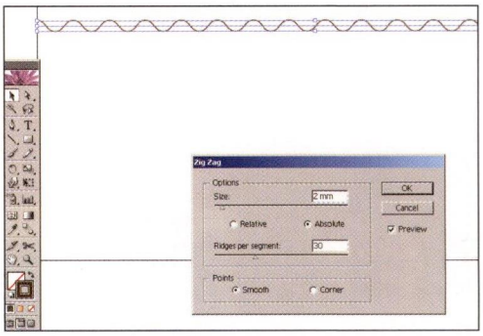
Select the two shapes and hit the Horizontal Align Center button in the Align palette. With them still selected, hit the Subtract From Shape Area button in the Pathfinder palette and click on Expand. Set the stroke to 'None' and the fill to a light shade.

Continued...



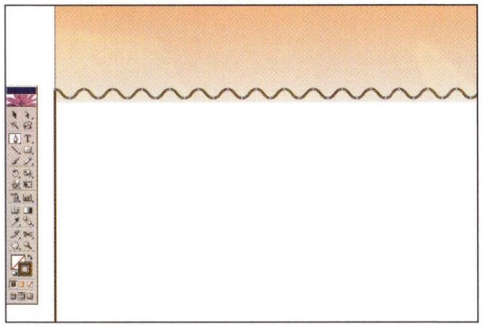
16: Create the background

Create a rectangle (M) that covers the top half of the artboard. With the Fill box in the toolbar at the front, click on the gradient strip in the Gradient palette. Select the gradient tool (G) then click and drag over the rectangle in order to define the direction.



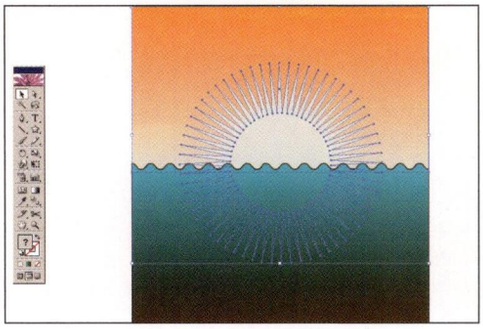
17: Making waves

Using the Pen tool (P), create a stroke the width of the artboard, then go to Effect>Distort & Transform>Zig-zag. Set the size to 2mm, the Ridges Per Segment to 30 and the Points to 'Smooth'. Click OK. Now go to Object>Expand Appearance, to make the stoke editable.



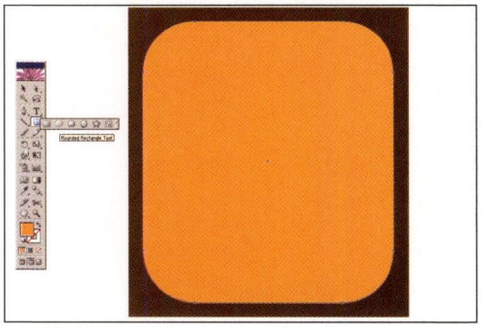
18: Apply a seafaring gradient

The next step is to place the waves over the lower area of the gradient. Having done that, use the Pen tool (P) to click on the end of the waves and pick up the stroke, then draw around the rest of the artboard with it. Finally, assign it a sea-coloured gradient.



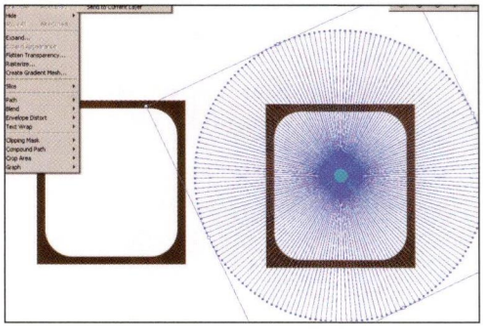
19: Create the sun with a star

Use the Star tool to create the sun. While scribing, use the up and down cursors to control the number of points – give this one approximately 64. Next, select both the star and the sky gradients and send them to the back (Ctrl/Apple & Shift &]).



20: Creating the border decor

Create a rectangle (M) the same dimensions as the artboard. Select the Rounded Rectangle tool by clicking and holding on the Rectangle tool. Create a lozenge over the top of the rectangle. While scribing, use the up and down cursors to adjust the roundness of the corners.

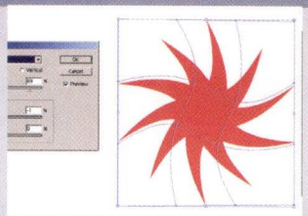


21: Cutting the lozenge out

Select both shapes, ensuring that the lozenge is on the top. In the Pathfinder palette, click on the Subtract From Shape Area button, then click the Expand button. Copy and paste a duplicate. Now create a big star directly in the middle that overlaps the entire shape and send it to the back.

Using the Warp tools to push the primitives into new territory

Applying warp envelopes to primitive shapes can create interesting results. Experiment by creating a shape then going to Object>Envelope Distort>Make With Warp. Scroll through the filters and adjust the sliders to produce different results. When you click OK, Illustrator will apply the envelope. To make this shape more editable, go to Object>Expand and click OK. From there you can apply another warp envelope to push the shape to further extremes.



■ *A few well-placed warpings can make even primitive shapes exotic*

It's the art of drawing without drawing

Every shape created in this picture has been generated either by a primitive shape or a single stroke of the Pen. Here's the breakdown...

Many-pointed stars make for good highlights

Use the Star tool to create highlights on and behind the octopus. Many-pointed stars can be very effective for highlighting objects

Start with a circle for the head

The head was created by joining two circles together then rounding off the corners to create a more bulbous effect

Single strokes for many legs

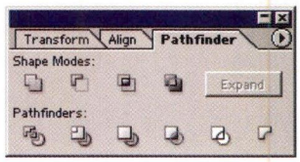
A single curved stroke was created for the legs. Outlining strokes is a fast and simple way to create curvy shapes

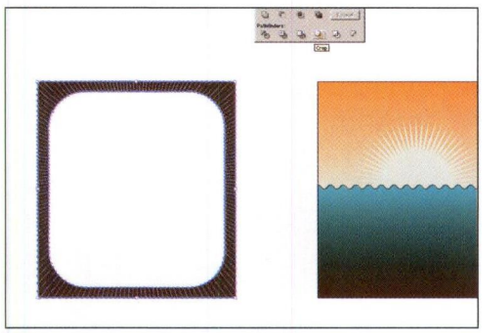
Make some waves with the Transform and Distort tools

Create waves using the Distort and Transform 'Zig-zag' function. Experiment with others such as Pucker & Bloat to evolve your primitives to the next level

Pathfinder tools, the glue for primitives

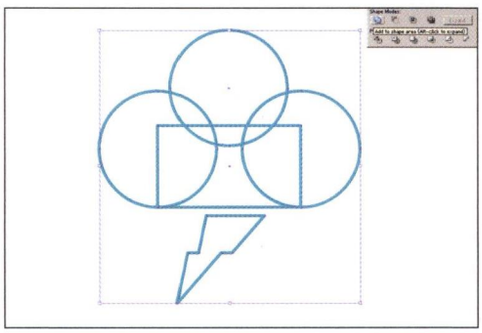
Using the Pathfinder tools to consolidate, divide and subtract shapes with other shapes is a fundamental accessory for any vector-based illustration





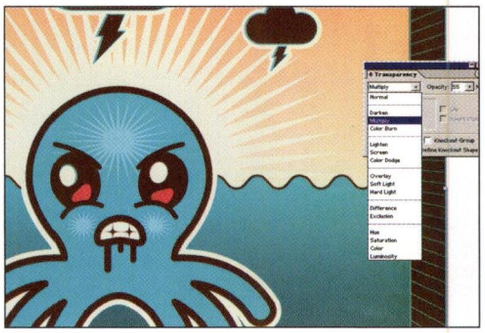
22: Complete the border

Select the shape and the star, then click Crop in the Pathfinder palette. Send to the front, and then place over the duplicate made in step 21. Group the two objects and place over the top of the sea and sky objects. Now position the octopus so that its head sits in the centre.



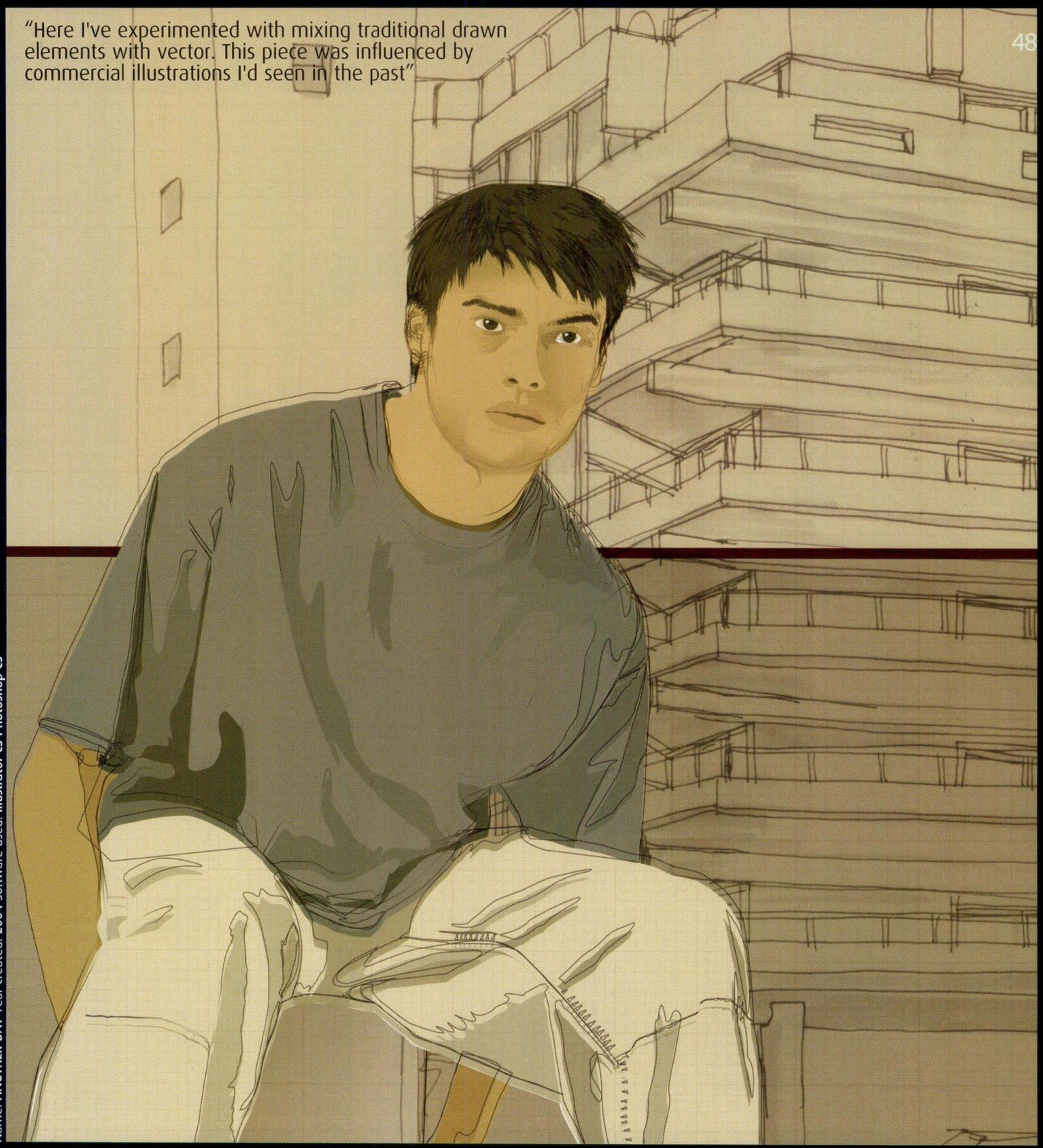
23: Create some bad weather

Create three circles to make the cloud. Use a rectangle (M) to fill in the gap between the lower two. Add the lightning (made earlier). Now consolidate them all (as explained in step three). Assign it a dark fill. Copy and paste two more, and then scale down.



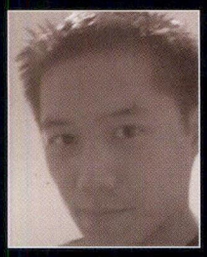
24: Add the finishing touches

As a finishing touch, give your image some texture. Open texture01.jpg from the CD and copy and paste into your image. Go to Window>Transparency, and in the palette set Transparency to 'Multiply'. Lower the transparency to approximately 50%.


"Here I've experimented with mixing traditional drawn elements with vector. This piece was influenced by commercial illustrations I'd seen in the past"
48

Name: **ANOTHER DAY** Year created: **2004** Software used: **Illustrator CS Photoshop CS**

DO IT YOUR OWN WAY



WE TALK TO COLIN LEE AND FIND OUT HOW THIS SELF-TAUGHT DESIGNER HAS BIG PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

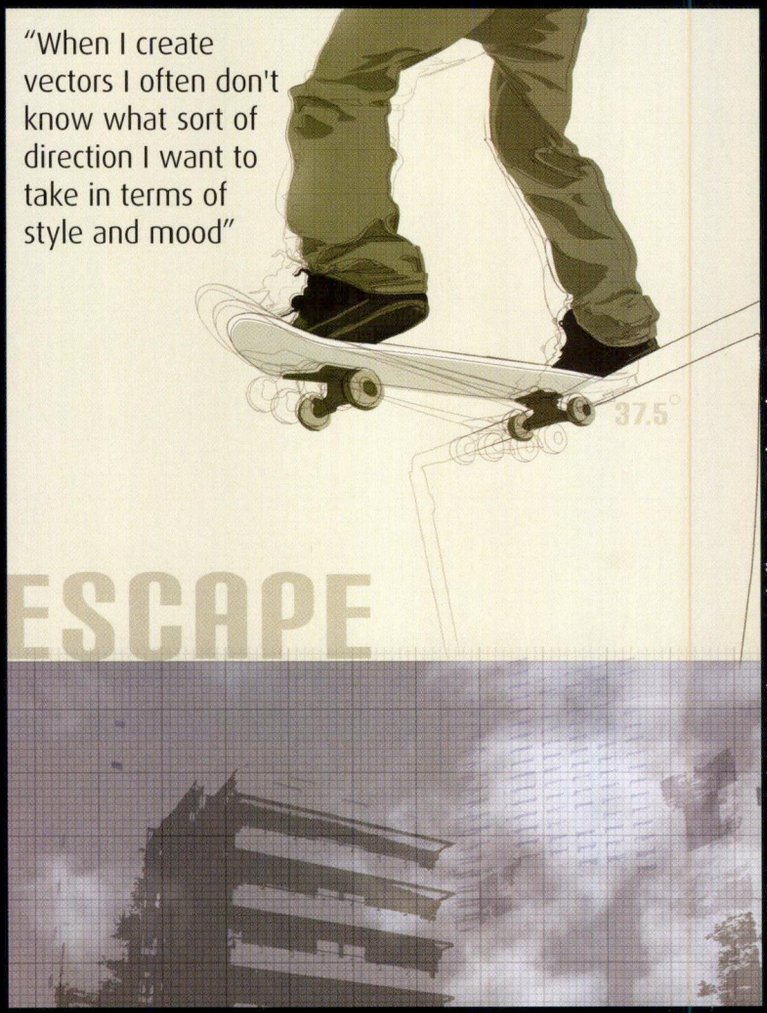
A lot of people feel that they have to train to use Illustrator, and that without proper instruction they'll falter by the wayside, while all the other designers who bothered going to classes storm past them. But of course this really isn't true, and often the greatest way to achieve satisfaction in something that you do is to learn it the hard way. By this we mean those three magic words – practise, practise, practise.

Colin Lee is one example of what can be achieved by just putting your head down and trying new things. As he explains, "I first got into vector design a year ago after seeing a tutorial in a design magazine. I had no previous experience with any sort of design software, so it was quite a struggle at first. I downloaded a trial of Illustrator and started with the basic silhouettes of people and objects, which gradually progressed into more detailed vectors."

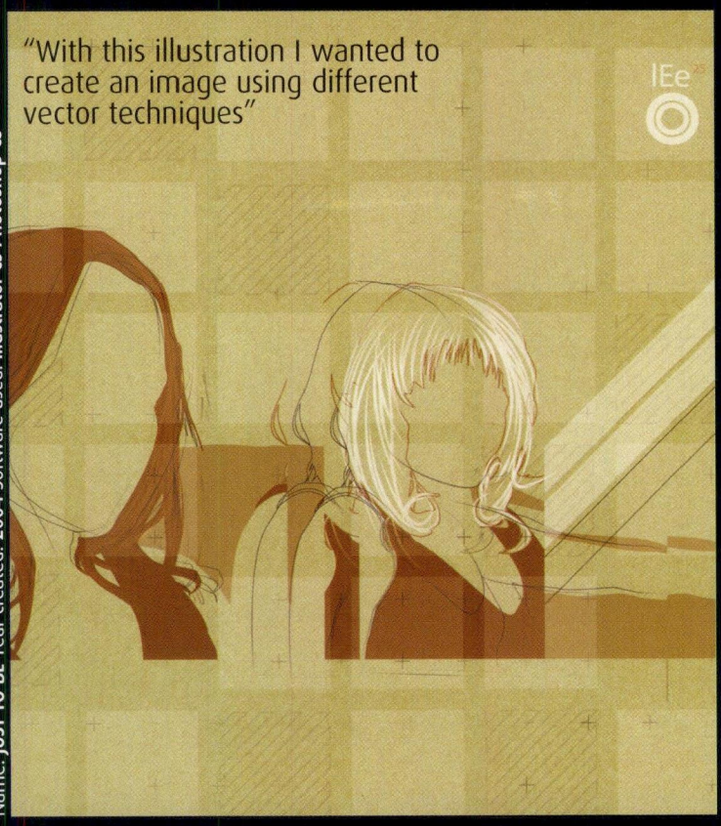
Colin's relationship with Illustrator has developed into a full-blown love affair and forms the basis of all his work. "My work always starts off with Illustrator, either as random shapes that progress into a full piece, or as a photo which I vectorise and develop into a piece by creating supporting elements." Although he uses Illustrator as a starting point, Colin also realises the benefit of using other programs and techniques. "I feel that a lot of my pieces have certainly benefited from my experiences with various traditional media. I also use Photoshop, mainly for composing the individual elements and to tweak the colours to enhance the feel of a piece."

The one drawback to teaching yourself is that you also have to be your own critic. But Colin has a good sense of how he needs to progress, and judges himself against his favourite artists. "The person who has influenced me most is Robert Lindstorm. This was when I realised what could be achieved with vectors. Seeing his work also made me want to create a higher level of finish in my pieces."

If you'd like to see how Colin's work develops, check out his page at **http://lee25.deviantart.com/** or contact him at **colin25@gmail.com**.

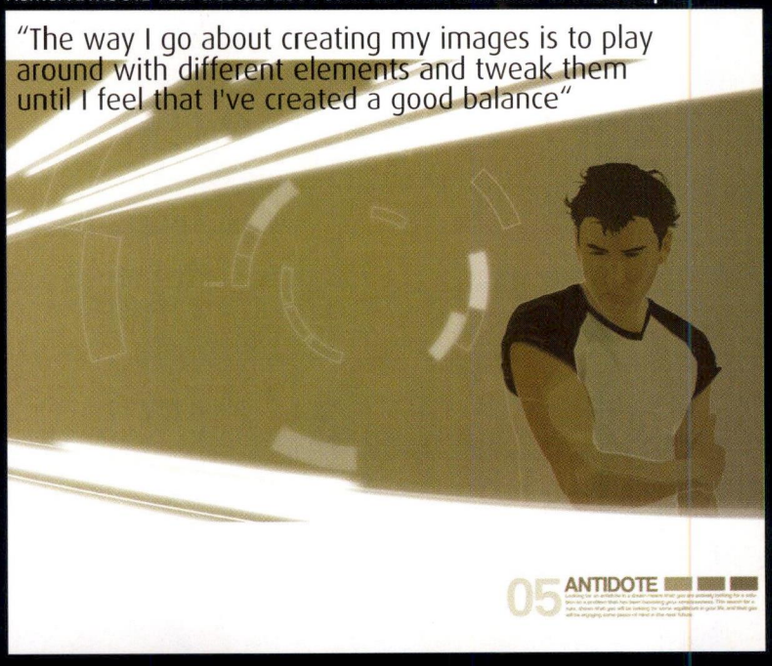


Name: **ESCAPE** Year created: **2004** Software used: **Illustrator CS Photoshop CS**



Name: **JUST TO BE** Year created: **2004** Software used: **Illustrator CS Photoshop CS**

Name: **ANTIDOTE** Year created: **2004** Software used: **Illustrator CS Photoshop CS**


"The way I go about creating my images is to play around with different elements and tweak them until I feel that I've created a good balance"
05 ANTIDOTE

[writer: **Steve Pick** | hardware: **Pentium PC** | software: **Painter, Illustrator**]

MERGING VECTOR ILLUSTRATIONS

Discover how to bring the magic of Mary Poppins to your computer screen

YOUR GUIDE

STEVE PICK is a lead artist, developing entertainment software in a variety of forms at Checkmate Solutions, working in the games industry for five whole years. Never leaving the comforting glow of a low-radiation monitor, you can check out his all-consuming pet animation project, Daisy Jones, at **www.daisyjones.co.uk**.

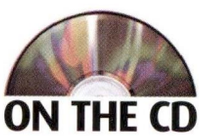
Vectors don't have to shout out. Sometimes it's nice to have them look as though they belong in their foreign surroundings. Here's how...

Animation is great. When this author was on his disappointingly DIY-styled BA Hons Animation course ('Here's today's lesson – watch more cartoons!'), the time was mainly spent watching a stack of Anime and copious amounts of *The Simpsons* and *Ren & Stimpy*. Whatever particular style you happen to favour, animation has two constants: bold characters painted on cel and painted backgrounds. Sometimes they are indistinguishable – check out any episode of *The Simpsons* to see what we mean.

With a vast majority of animation though, you will have a traditionally painted background and cel-painted characters. Anime is a good place to see the two marry together well. Both share similar colour palettes, and tricks are adopted to make the cel-painted character look like it belongs in the painted background.

You can create this kind of effect digitally, too. In this example we've begun by creating a background in Painter. We've gone for soft sponge effects, although you can adapt this to suit your own style and pick different mediums for different intensities of colour. Of course, it's not a disaster if you haven't got Painter – simply paint your background onto paper and then scan it in. The shooting stars in this image were sequins that were scanned in, so feel free to experiment with as many different textures as you like.

With our valuable tips, you can still make the background blend with the vector, so grab some hot chocolate, fire up the background music and dive straight into this tutorial to see how it's done! ■



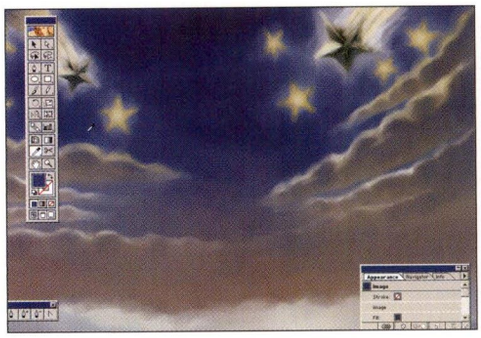
ON THE CD

tonight_background.jpg
tonight_pencils.jpg
tonight.ai

MERGING VECTOR ILLUSTRATIONS

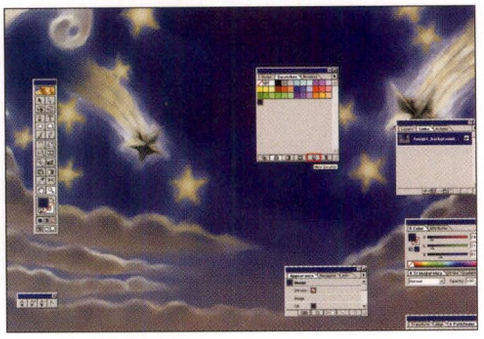
Step-by-step: blend a vector image with a painted background

Find out how to make Mary feel as though she belongs, with a little help from Painter and Illustrator



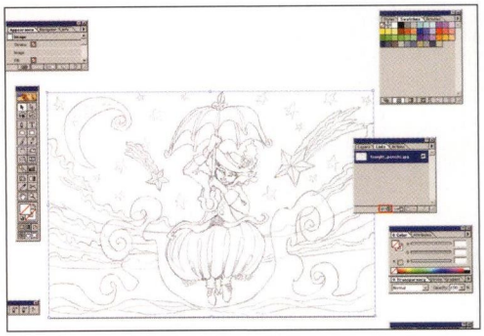
1: Set up a colour palette

First things first – open up the tonight_background.jpg file from the cover CD and place it into Illustrator. Using the Eyedropper tool (I) and holding down Shift, click on the image to select the relevant colour. This colour will appear in your Stroke/Fill box.



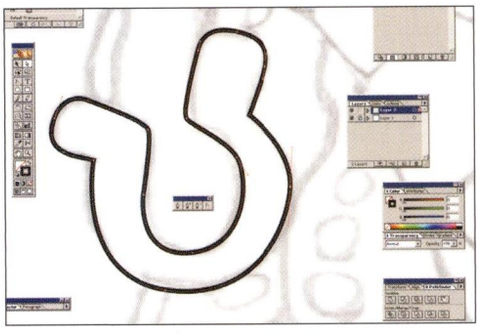
2: Swatch the birdie

Click on the New Swatch button at the bottom of the Swatch palette. You'll now have a new colour swatch with the colour you sampled. Repeat this process for other colours – major colours such as the sky, moon, clouds (plus the clouds at the bottom) and stars.



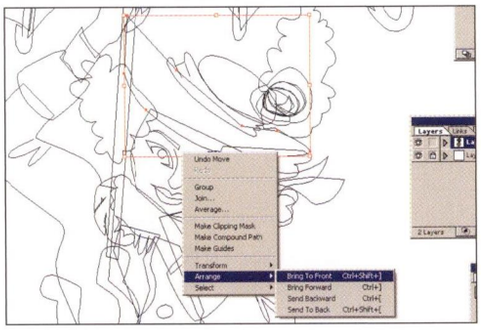
3: Replacing placed images easily

Use the Links palette (Replace Link button) to replace the tonight_background.jpg image with the tonight_pencils.jpg image (again, found on the cover CD). Reduce the opacity of the image to 25-50% and lock the layer. Now you're ready to start vectorising the character.



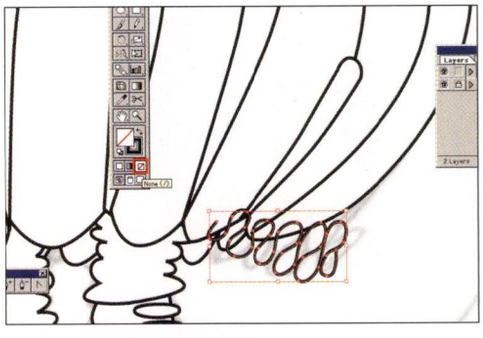
6: Taming the Bezier

If you find that you've got unsightly kinks in your spline, select points with the Direct Selection tool (A) and use the cursors to nudge a point into a more suitable position on the spine, then convert it back into an anchor again. Practice makes perfect!



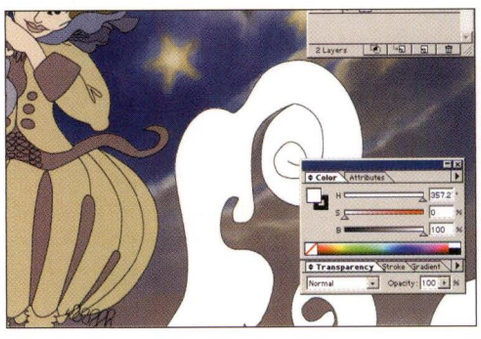
7: Fill with white

Once your character is vectorised, select all the vectors and give them a white fill. You'll notice that some shapes will disappear. Use Outline mode (Ctrl & Y) to select the outlines of hidden shapes, then go to the Object>Arrange>Bring To Front menu.



8: Remove the fill colour

Because you have give every shape a universal white fill, you may find that it's necessary to remove the fill colour of open splines by selecting them and clicking on the None (/) box – which you'll find nestling underneath the Fill/Stroke area.

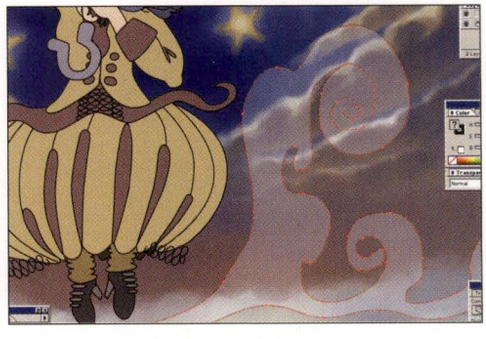


11: Mix it up

If there are colours that aren't on your swatch, use the Color palette to get them. In this case, we need some cold grey for the parasol, light peach for her skin and red for the rose – which we have desaturated somewhat so it blends in better. (HSB on the palette's Options panel.)

12: More HSB shenanigans

We need to start creating more depth for her, so click on shapes that need to be darker (such as her legs and underneath her parasol) and use the Brightness scale to add more black. Alter other colours as you see fit for variation's sake – not too much though!

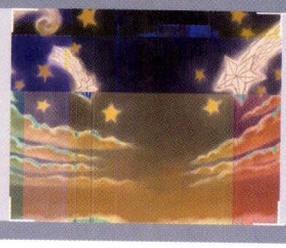


13: Making things clearer

Lock the background layer and now select all the cloud elements (including open splines). Reduce the opacity of the clouds to 25%. Don't worry if you can't see them properly at the moment – we'll be making them more prominent soon.

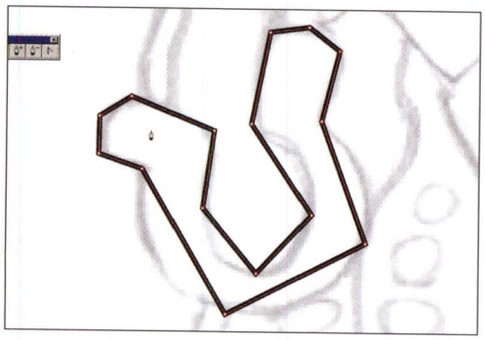
Humans 0 Computers 1

During the making of this tutorial, we experienced some evil computer badness. For some reason, when the painted background was opened back into Painter in its native .riff format, it was a corrupted mess – both that and the backup. Luckily, a .jpg of the image had been saved, so it could be re-rendered from that. Here's the lesson: when working with digital artwork always save a non-native format backup, preferably one with no compression (eg .bmp). Let our suffering not be in vain!



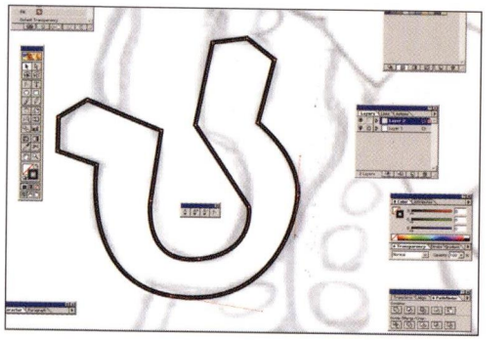
Not exactly what was being worked on the night before...

Bezier bonanza



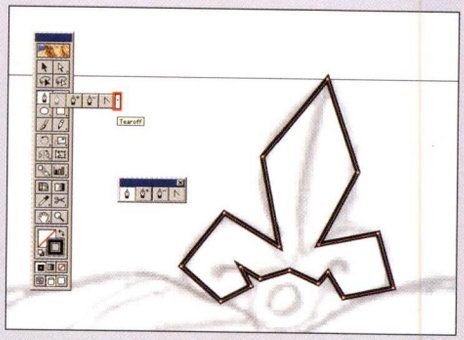
4: Let the vectoring begin!

Create a new layer, and using the Pen tool (P) start tracing around one of the shapes of the character with a 1pt stroke. In this case we've traced around the parasol handle. Use as few points as possible, because the next stage will show you how to smooth them out.



5: Anchoring to change points

Your next move is to use the Convert Anchor Point tool (Shift & C) in order to click and drag Bezier handles from the points you have created. Hold down the left mouse button to align the curve so that it fits with the background pencil sketch.

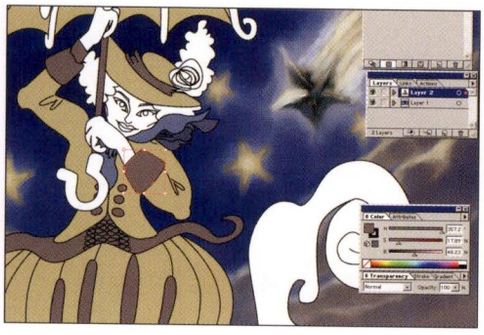


Tear along the dotted line

Want to minimise mouse movement? If you hold down the left mouse button over the Pen tool icon, you'll see the other spline-creation icons. Still holding the mouse down, move the cursor to the end and left in order to 'tear off' these icons as a handy mini-toolbox.

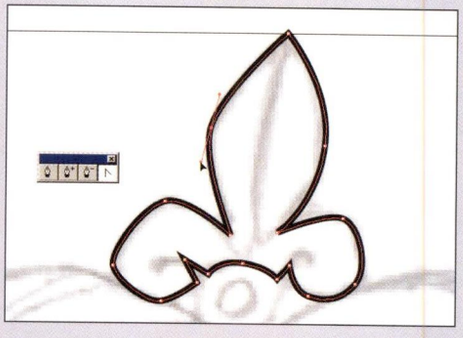
9: Coming together nicely

Once you've arranged the shapes in the right order, use the Links palette to swap the tonight_pencils.jpg back to the original background_pencils.jpg, not forgetting to unlock it and reset the opacity to 100%. Now you can easily see both background and vectors together. Next – colours!



10: Cast your mind back...

Remember the swatches? Time to use 'em! Click on the Fill box of the Fill/Stroke area of the toolbox to ensure that you'll just be altering fill colours. Now start clicking on shapes and then the swatch that you want for that shape, to fill it in the swatch's colour.



Stretching out

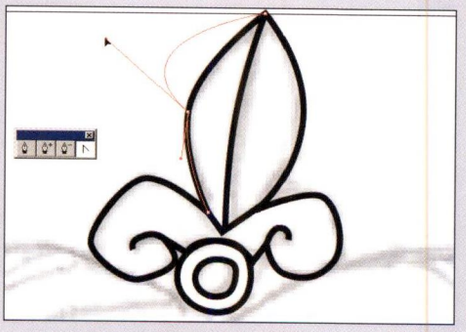
Click and drag with the Convert Anchor tool, although dragging out different distances from the original point will give you a greater curve variety. Also, you'll find you can use the cursors to nudge and tease points until the curve works.

14: Different strokes

Next, we'll make our strokes subtler by either reducing the opacity of them or adding a darker colour stroke that isn't black. In the case of the lips, drag the fill colour over the stroke colour, then use the Brightness gauge to darken the stroke's colour.

15: Adding even more depth

Create a new layer above everything else and use it to create non-filled shapes where you think shadow will fall. After each shape creation, use the Convert Anchor tool to smooth out angles. Notice we're taking into account the moon's major light source with rim lighting.

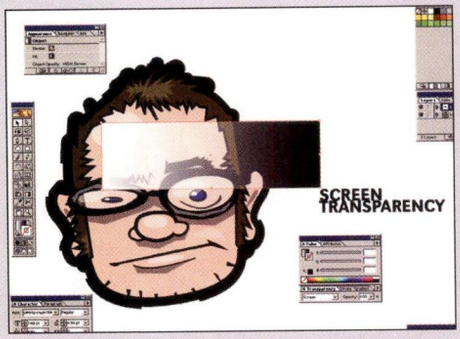


A few more pointers...

Don't forget that you can alter separate Beziers by clicking on a point with the Direct Selection tool, then using the Convert Anchor tool to click-drag one of the Beziers. Click on the actual point with the Convert Anchor tool to reset the Beziers.

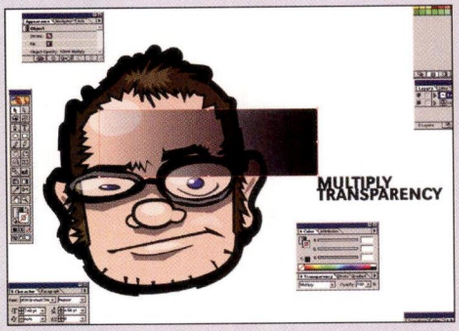
MERGING VECTOR ILLUSTRATIONS

Transparent gradients



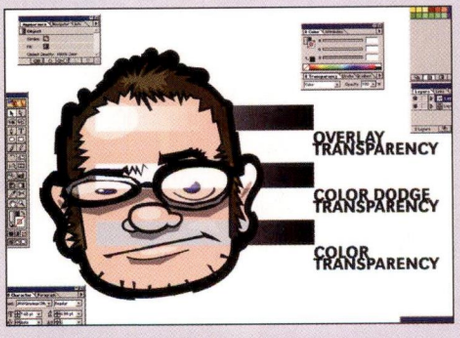
Brightening things

Creating a transparent gradient in Illustrator can be a bit of a mystery. It all depends on what you want to use the gradient for. Using a white-to-black gradient, if you want to highlight things with light, give your gradient a Screen transparency from the Transparency palette.



Darkening things

Alternatively, you can give the gradient a Multiply transparency, which will bring out the black of the gradient, but alpha out the white. This is great to use as a universal shadow, covering everything underneath it in a blanket of goth doom.



Messing about with things

There are many other transparency modes that you can experiment with. Don't forget that changing the white/black values of the basic gradient will change the overall opacity of the Screen/Multiply effects. Don't limit yourself to black/white gradients either!

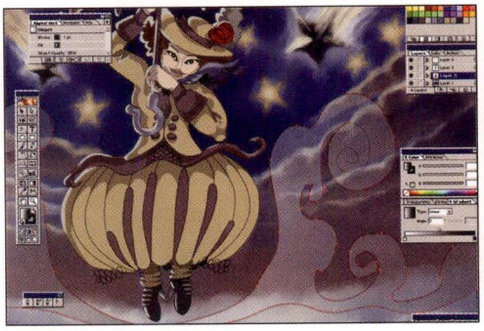
Continued...

16: Sim-sala-bim – shadow!

Select all the shapes (use Ctrl & A if everything is locked) and add a fill colour of black. Reduce the opacity to 25% and look out for stray points that you can tidy up with the Direct Selection tool (A). Already this is looking more cel-shaded. Now for light...

17: You want highlights in them?

Same procedure – create a new layer above everything else, lock everything underneath that layer, and draw closed shapes over the character where you think the moonlight will hit. Use the Swatch palette's Moonlight colour to turn your shapes into solid yellow.



18: Your turn, clouds!

Select the two cloud shapes, use Alt and cursor up to clone them. Cursor down to lock the shapes back into place, then add a gradient to them by clicking on the Gradient box (>) underneath the Stroke/Fill box. You'll get the default fill – normally black to white at 0 degrees.

19: The first transparent gradient

Change the gradient angle to 270 and increase the opacity to 50%. Here's the magic: on the Transparency palette, change the Normal transparency pull-down to read 'Screen'. Drag the Moonlight swatch colour to the white colour box of the Gradient palette.

20: Tarting up the clouds

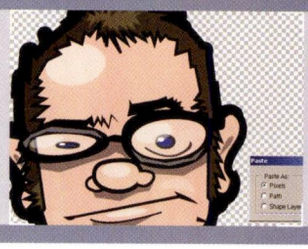
Remove the stroke lines from the clouds to merge them better with the background. Select the Moonlight layer and add highlights to the clouds as you did on the character – but this time make them 25% opaque and use a Screen transparency mode.

21: Adding ambient light

The cloudbase below our character gives off a light blue ambient light. To represent this, make a new layer (locking the others) and create more shapes where you think the ambient light from below will hit our character. Select all the shapes you have created.

Cutting and pasting package boundaries

Photoshop and Illustrator are very good at talking to each other. One of the things that artists often do is import vectors into Photoshop before saving them out as texture sheets. Cutting and pasting over the two packages is insanely easy. You want some artwork placed from Photoshop to Illustrator? Select it all (Ctrl & A), copy it (Ctrl & C), Alt-Tab to Illustrator and paste it (Ctrl & P). It works the other way too: select a bunch of vectors in Illustrator, Alt-Tab to Photoshop and paste them into your Photoshop file. It saves time that you can then spend getting out more!



■ *The cutting and pasting method was used to import this vectorised character into Photoshop*

Flying over moonbeams

A quick recap on what went into making our vectorised Mary Poppins sit nicely with the painted background

Check your light sources
Don't just chuck a character onto your painted background – scope out light sources in the background and let them affect your character

Transparent gradients
Used to soften the ambient lighting and shadowing, but can also be used to bring out the clouds more

Softer strokes
Deadening the original black strokes helps our character look more believable in her environment

Colour sampling
Always grab a sample palette swatch from your painting to help out with the colouring process of your character

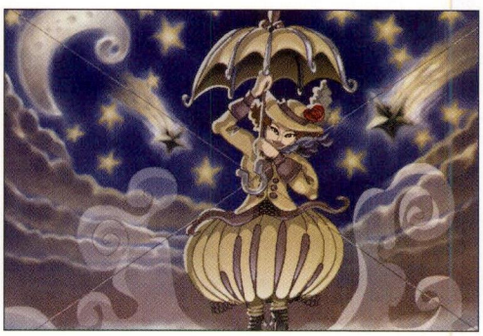
Cloud cover
The semi-transparent clouds look cel-shaded, but also look as though they belong

22: Gradient light versus opaque

Drag the light blue swatch onto your fill and get rid of the black stroke. Give these a Screen transparency and give the light elements on the dress and shoes a gradient with the light blue to black. Other elements can have a 50% opacity to mix and match.

23: One final touch...

Lastly, grab the four shapes under the umbrella and clone them with the Alt-nudge technique. Give them a gradient of black to white at 50%, and instead of Screen use a Multiply transparency. This globally darkens everything underneath nicely and brings the parasol out more.

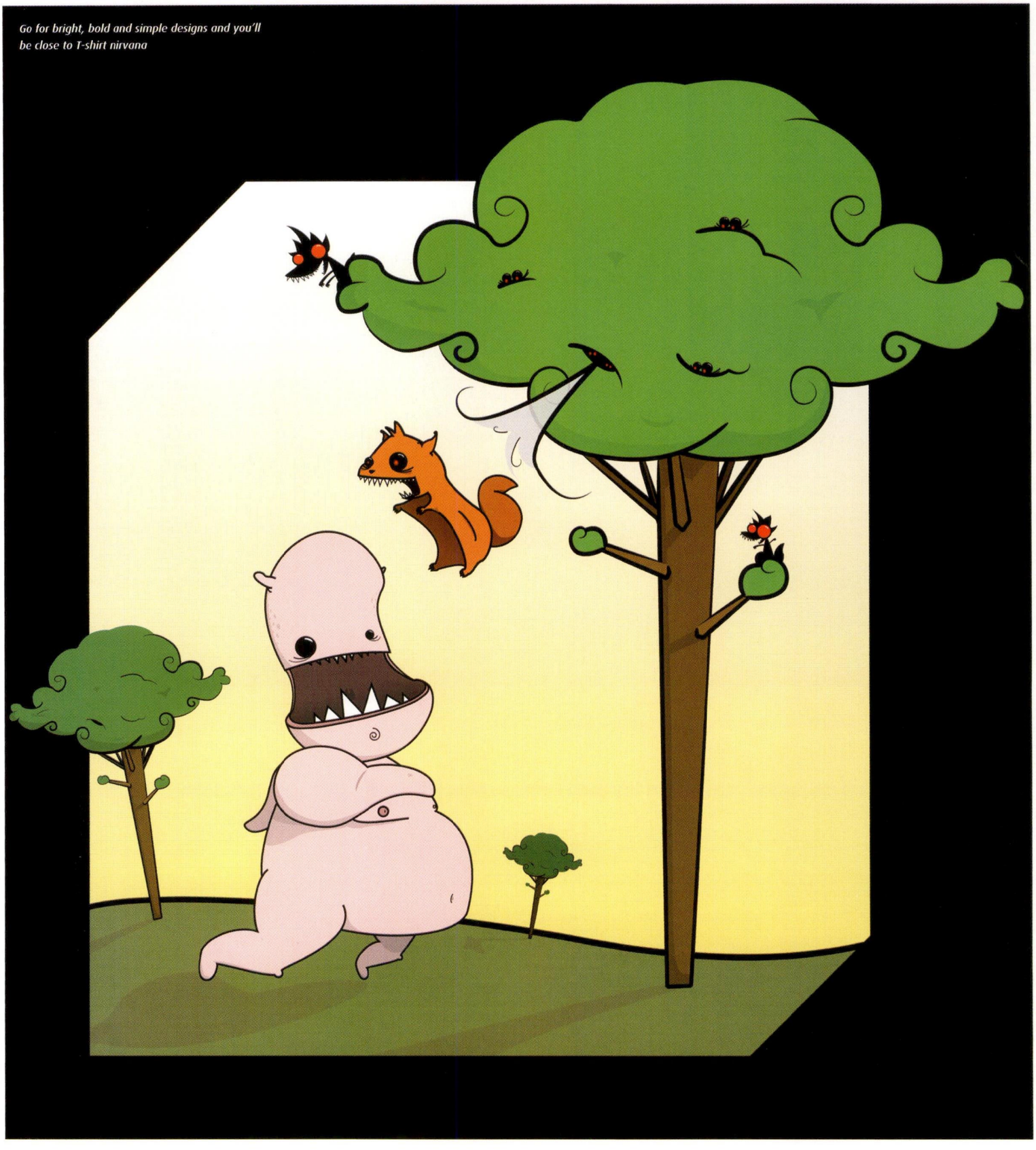


24: Pasting vectors into Photoshop

Finally, copy all the vectors you've created and Alt-tab back to Photoshop. Paste them into the tonight_background.jpg (select Pixels when the dialog appears), and the graphic should resize the frame of the background. Double-click to rasterise. Well done!

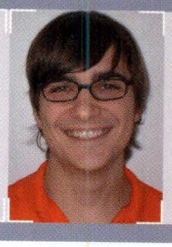
[writer: **Phil Garwood** | hardware: **Pentium PC** | software: **Illustrator CS**]

DESIGN A T-SHIRT IN ILLUSTRATOR



Go for bright, bold and simple designs and you'll be close to T-shirt nirvana

YOUR GUIDE



PHIL GARWOOD is a student in Toronto, Canada studying Digital Media Arts. Because he's always been interested in art and computers, this seems a natural route for him. Illustration has long been a passion of his and he's confident that it will continue to grow with time and practice.

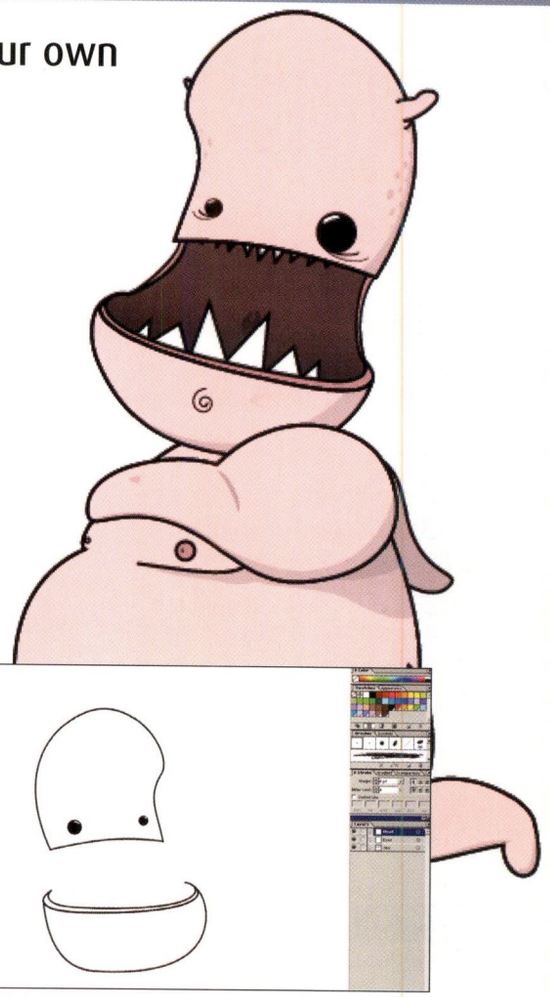
Add a spark of originality to your wardrobe by designing your own T-shirts. It really isn't difficult, as we show...

If you've ever seen a witty graphic T-shirt that you just loved but didn't want to pay the expensive designer prices for, maybe we can help you. Not only can we show you how to be absolutely original, but we'll also reveal how it's surprisingly simple to create amazing images in just a short period of time.

In the next few pages, we'll be outlining how to design your image in Illustrator using numerous yet very simple techniques and tools. When creating your image, you'll want to keep in mind what you're going to be using it for. Since this particular image will be used for a T-shirt, here are a few tips that might come in useful.

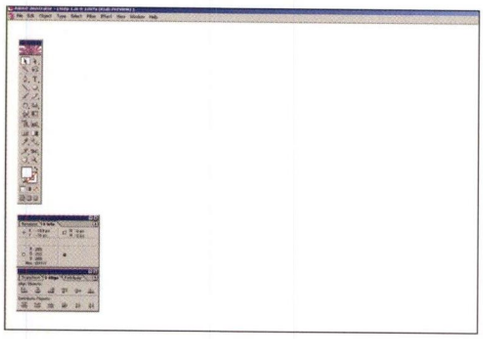
Use bright, bold colours. When you're transferring to a T-shirt, you never know if the colours are going to fade or dull down when they're on there. Also, since you're not always transferring to a white T-shirt, you want to make sure the colours don't fade.

If you're transferring the design at home, make sure you use appropriate equipment for the colour fabric you're working with. Keep it simple! The simpler the design, the easier the shirt will be to look at and easier to distinguish in a crowd. And have fun! ■



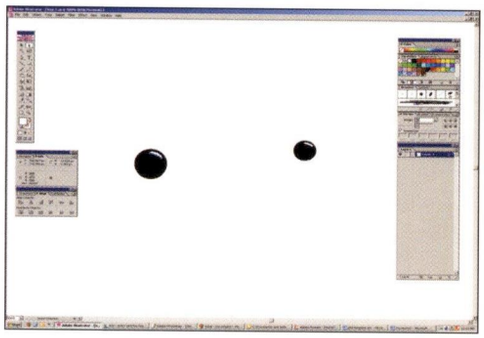
Step-by-step: designs on your wardrobe

Can't afford any new clothes? You can quickly get yourself a tasty new look by creating designs and putting them on your plain T-shirts



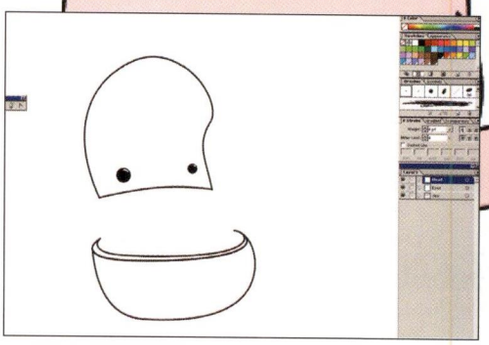
1: Set up the document

We've never been fond of boundaries. In the View menu, select Hide Artboard to hide the boundaries of the page. Since this is a vector image, we can scale the image to as small or as large as we want it without degrading the quality, so why do we need borders?



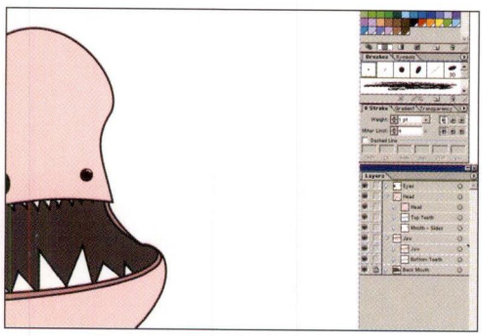
2: The start of something big

Use the Ellipse tool to create two perfect circles using the Shift key, and set them to black. On the same layer, create two more circles but make them white this time. Using the Direct Selection tool, select the bottom anchors of these and bend them up to create a light in the eyes.



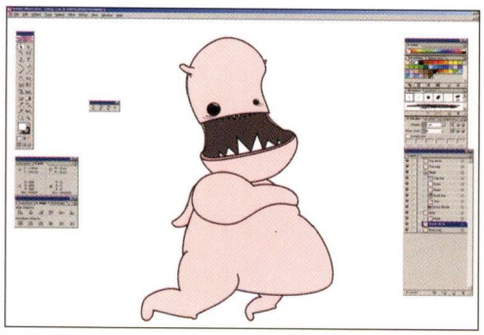
3: Outlining with the Pen tool

Create a few new layers, and using the Pen tool begin to create the shapes of the head. Bring the thickness of the stroke up so there is a definite outline as to where the shapes are. Remember to label your layers – there's going to be a lot, so it's helpful to do this early.



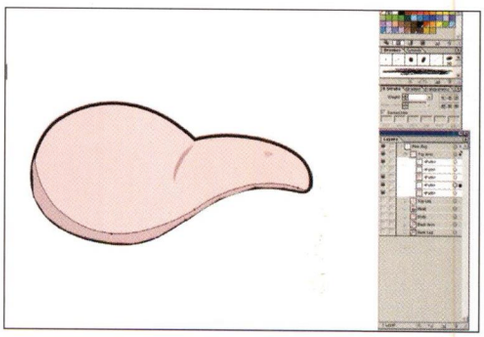
4: Organise those layers

Keep creating layers and labelling them as you progress with adding more outlines to the face. Try to keep in mind which layers are on top of which in the Layers palette to get a feel of where you're putting things. Begin to colour the shapes as you see fit.



5: Developing the character

Keep developing the character using the Pen tool and multiple layers. Also, keep the stroke width the same for the entire body for continuity within the character. Creating the back legs and arms is as simple as drawing them and dragging them to be the bottom-most layers.

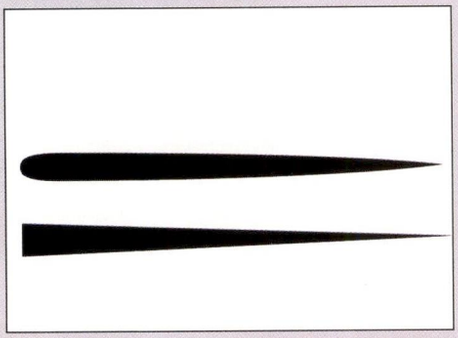


6: Shading a limb

Zoom in on the top arm you've drawn and hide all the other layers by clicking on the eye icons in the Layers palette. Duplicate the arm and set the fill to None. Use the Pen tool to draw your shading, and when done, bring the outline of the arm to the top of the layer, giving the arm a solid shadow.

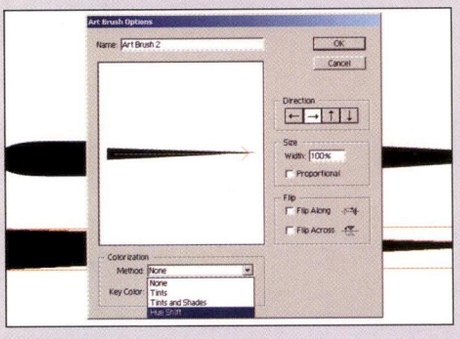
DESIGN A T-SHIRT IN ILLUSTRATOR

Creating custom art brushes



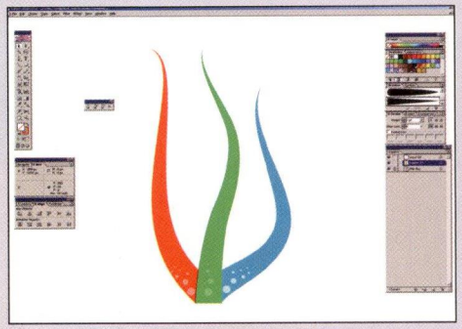
Play around with some shapes

When you're drawing something straight into Illustrator, brushes can make or break an image, so it's worth customising them. Using the Pen tool, draw a couple of elongated shapes, playing with roundness, sharpness and other factors.



Brush creation

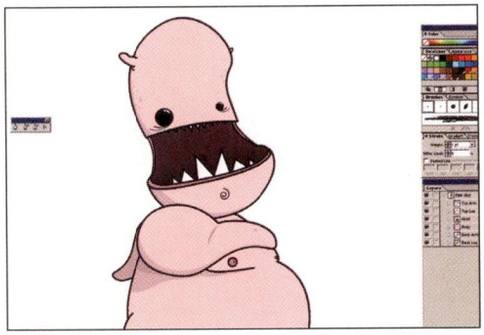
Select your shape, and in your Brushes palette select New Brush. Select Art Brush from the list and you'll find yourself with a variety of options. Where it says 'Colorization', select Hue Shift from the drop-down menu to enable the ability to change the stroke colour.



Test out your new brushes

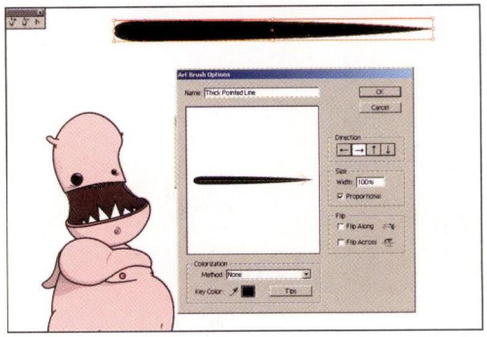
Draw a few lines with your Pen tool or the Pencil tool, and select your newly created brush from the Brushes palette. You'll find there are loads of uses for custom brushes, especially when drawing a character, and the effects you can produce are endless.

Continued...



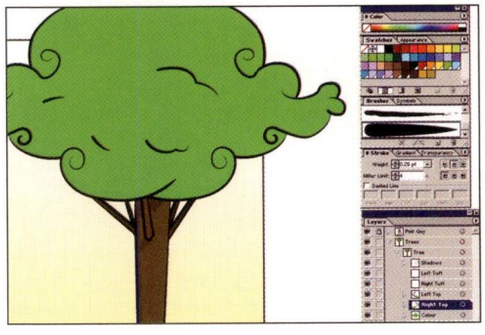
7: Giving the character character

Finish shading the entire character using the method described in step six. When shading, ALWAYS keep in mind where the light source is coming from. Shading from every which way can be difficult for the eye to properly perceive. The spots on his head add a bit of cute.



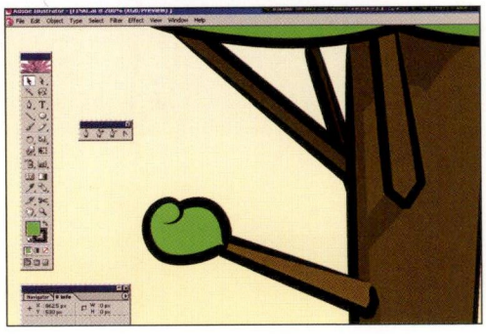
8: Creating a custom art brush

Now that we have the character done, we'll want to add some sort of background. To give the background a more organic feel, we'll create a custom art brush to give the strokes of the background elements a softer, more flowing feel. See the side panel for how this is done.



11: Trunk and detailing

Draw the trunk of the tree in a stylised way that fits the rest of the image so far. When drawing the branches, notice the attention to the apparent depth given by the smaller brush strokes and the darker colour of the brown used for the main part of the trunk.

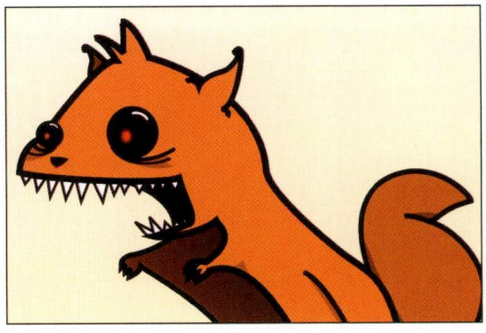


12: The little things matter

As in any piece of art, the details matter just as much as the main focus. Adding smaller branches which give off extra shadow and depth can give the image a much more intimate feeling. The tufts of leaves are simply two pen strokes filled and our custom art brush applied.

15: Adding some flavour

Well, we've got a prancing monster having a lovely old time, but there just isn't any conflict – and what is art without a nice smattering of conflict? You can draw any sort of character here, but we decided to go with a nice friendly flying squirrel. As with everything else, it's a simple enough shape.

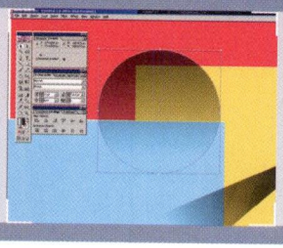


16: A change of pace

The friendly squirrel just didn't do it for us. Adding small red radial gradients to the eyes, plus menacing teeth makes this friendly squirrel into a devilish problem maker that really adds some spice to the image. Remember to add accurate detailing to our new friend.

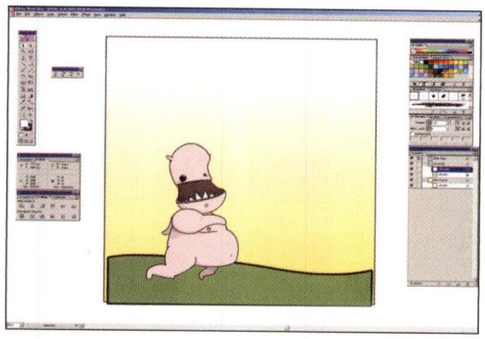
Transparency types

Transparencies in an image can really add interest. In the Transparency panel you can find a drop-down list with many types of transparencies. Try a few to see what they do, but take special note of the Multiply type. Try creating some boxes with a black-to-white gradient and put the Multiply Transparency type on. You'll find that all the white gets knocked out, leaving you with a black-to-transparent fill, which is useful for different shadows and effects.



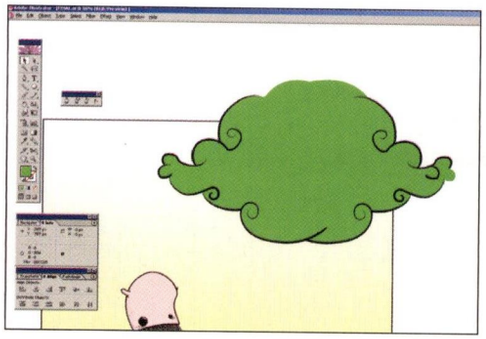
■ You can make any sort of dynamic shape and apply this method of shadowing to it

ILLUSTRATOR WORLD
www.illustratorworld.com/
A site with loads of vector artists for inspiration, a few tutorials and a great questions forum.
John Schwegel Illustration
www.johnschwegel.com/
A traditional illustrator who's gone digital. One of our favourite illustrator's Web sites displaying the versatility of Adobe Illustrator.



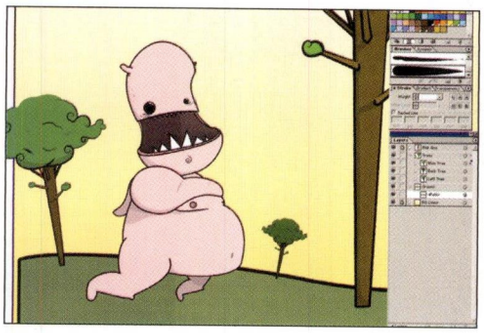
9: Create the background

Adding the background is simple. Create a new layer and draw a large box around where you want to frame the entire picture. Using the Gradient palette, fill in the box with a linear gradient. Now draw a ground plane on a new layer for our darling to walk on.



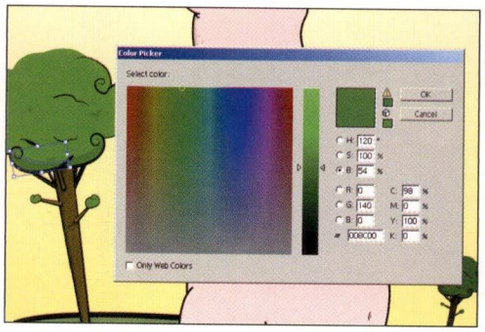
10: Lots of curls

This step should be fun. We want to draw the leaves of a tree in a stylistic way, so begin drawing series of curly lines, stroked with our new custom art brush that we made. Position and fill in all of the lines together to create the illusion of a treetop.



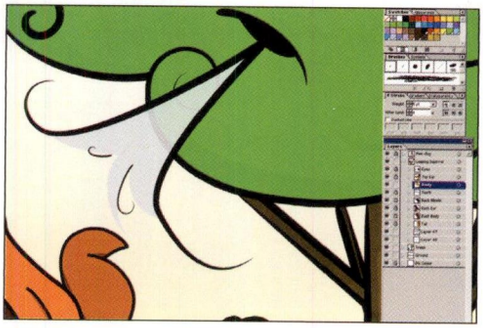
13: Just a few more

We're just going to duplicate the Tree layer a few times, then shrink and rotate them with the Transform tool and place them in new spots. You want to make sure you don't clutter the image with unnecessary trees. Just add enough to enhance the design and flow of the image.



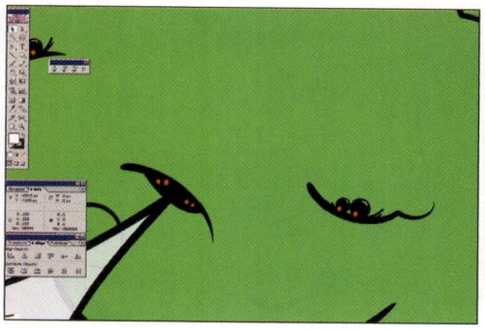
14: The Color palette

The trees in the background need to be darkened to give the illusion of them actually IN the background. Select the main portion and go into the Color palette. You'll notice three letters: H, S and B. Select B for brightness and you can darken the colour with the slider to the left.



17: Create some motion

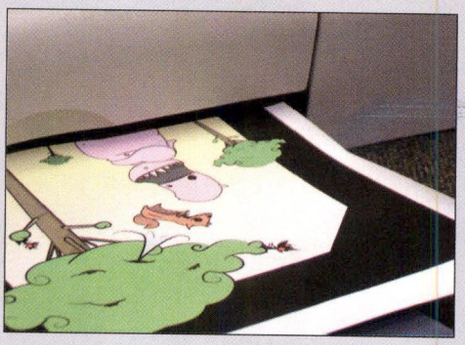
Since we're trying to tell the viewer that the squirrel is coming from the tree, let's add a simple motion gust using our custom-made art brush and a transparent fill. As we can't really draw air, using a light grey colour with 90% transparency conveys the idea perfectly.



18: Wildlife is everywhere, especially here

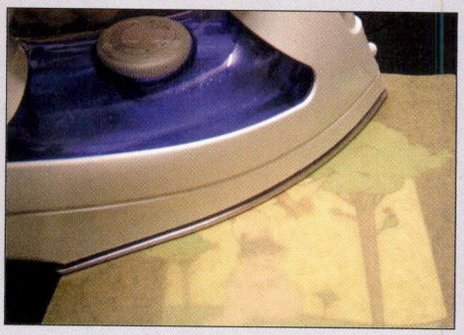
Drawing lots of eyes in the nooks and crannies of the tree adds just a little bit of surrealistic fun to the image. It's just as simple as creating a few ellipses and a few radial gradients – and there you have it.

Print your own T-shirts



Paper magic

Your first step is to buy some T-shirt printing paper. You can get this from any stationery or craft store, or get some from WHSmith. Expect to pay about £7 for 10 sheets. It only works with laserwriter printers, so if you have one of them, fire it up and print out your design.



Iron monger

When your design has printed, trim away the excess paper. If you have an intricate design, apply a background to it in Illustrator to make cutting out that much easier. Peel away the backing, place on your T-shirt and cover with the protective sheet. Now iron over it for 90 seconds.

Ready to wear

Peel away the protective layer and admire your new T-shirt. It can be washed as normal, although tumble-drying will make the design crack after a while. You can buy T-shirt printing paper for dark coloured fabric, light coloured fabric, and even glow-in-the-dark paper!

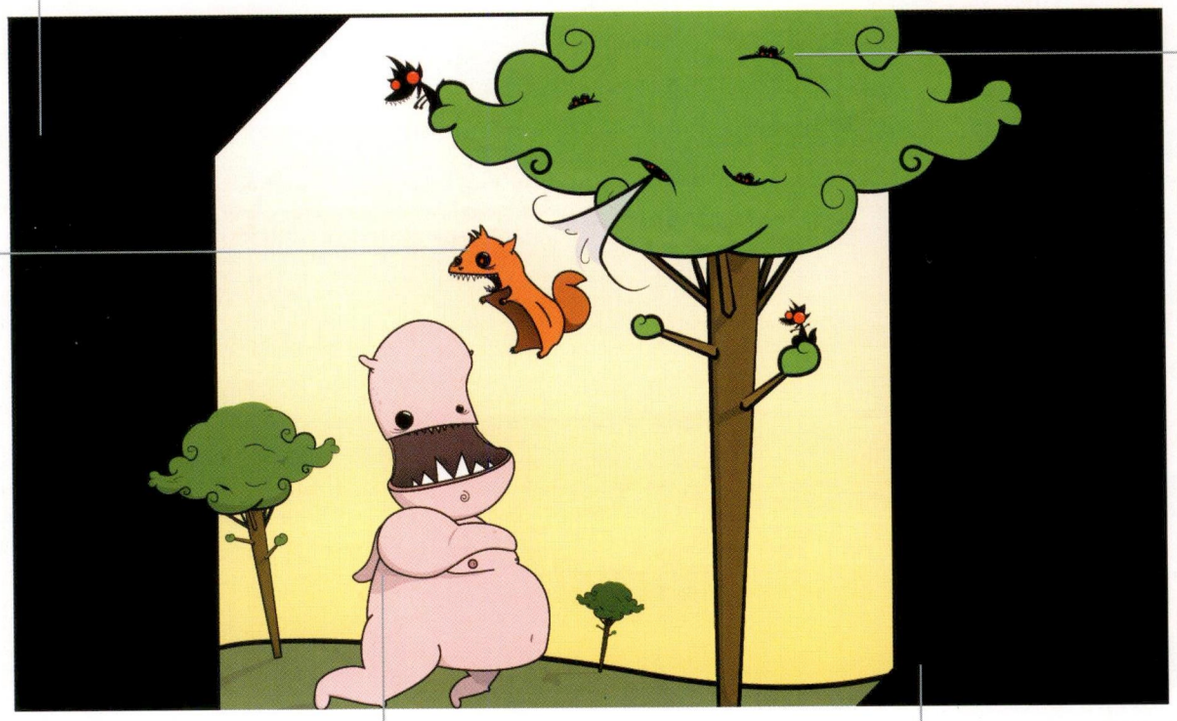
DESIGN A T-SHIRT IN ILLUSTRATOR

Aspects of an image created in Illustrator from scratch

Creating an image in Illustrator from scratch can be a daunting task if you don't have a steady set of tools to use; here are a few quick notes to help you out

Master the Pen tool above all others!
This can be the fastest and most precise tool in your weaponry if you learn how to wield it properly

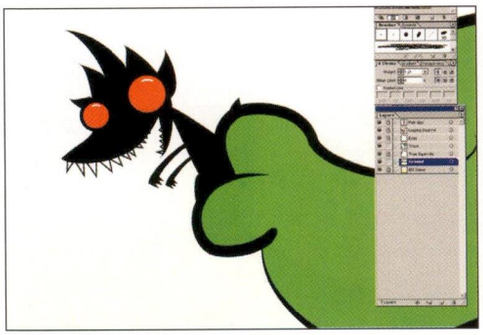
For future reference, organise your layers
Making many well-organised layers can divide your image into perfect sections, making it easy to manipulate later



Details can make or break an image
People notice the little things. Always pay attention to small quirks and details when creating a piece like this

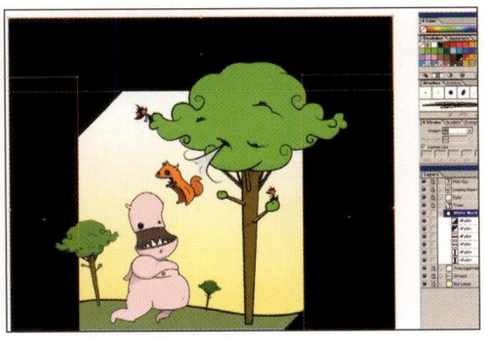
Keep tweaking lines
Not satisfied with a curve you've drawn? Go back and use the Anchor tool to edit the curve to your liking

Ignore boundaries
Think out of the box when creating an image for a T-shirt. Linear designs can end up being boring and uninspired



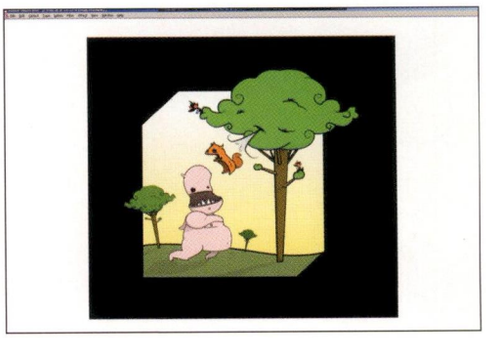
19: Silhouettes for variety

Drawing in a few silhouettes of some squirrels is an easy way of giving the impression that there are more squirrels in the tree without drawing, detailing and shading new ones. Plus, it adds some more fun to the image with little guys poking out of the tree.



20: Framing the image

We're almost done! Framing the image and leaving some bits poking out of the standard 'box' shape is great for making a more interesting image for a T-shirt. Just add some large black boxes behind the Tree layer to have them pop out, but nothing else.



21: Touching up

Finally, we want to add a few last shadows to the ground. Note that the ground won't be flat, so give some shape to the shadows. Export the image out as an .ai file to Adobe Photoshop to resize and crop down to the size you want it to be on the T-shirt. Now print it and transfer it.

Designing the purrfect T-shirt

If our tutorial has you fired up about creating T-shirts, read on for more valuable advice when starting out

The humble T-shirt is a surprisingly powerful piece of clothing. Your T-shirts speak volumes about the kind of person you are, and instantly lets people know your beliefs/opinions/style.

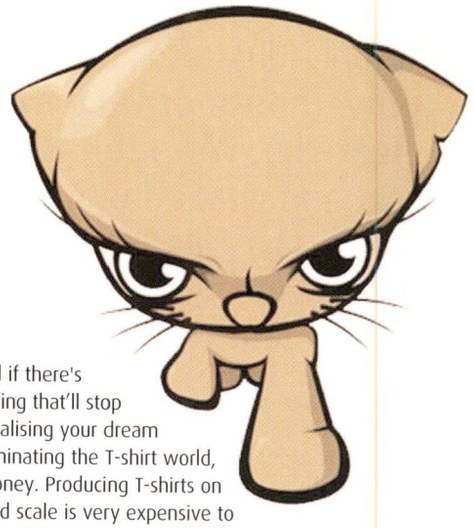
They're also a powerful and relatively inexpensive way of advertising a product or service. But it's not easy to start producing your own T-shirts if you're a fledgling business. Deciding what kind of look to go for is really important – especially if you're trying to build a brand identity – and it can also be very expensive. We spoke to Emma from the Anarkitty design company about her range of T-shirt designs.

Emma became a freelance designer after being made redundant from two Web design jobs. She set up the Anarkitty business **(www.anarkitty.co.uk)** so she could do the things she loved on her own terms. With its very distinctive characters and style, it made sense for her to design T-shirts that could be sold to help increase revenue, and also increase awareness of the business. So did she have to take anything special into account when designing the T-shirts?

"When I started out, the T-shirts I designed were purely for myself – very self-indulgent," reveals Emma. "I would more or less take my illustrations and try to apply them to a T-shirt. At first I thought it would be no problem: just apply my design to the front of a T-shirt and there you go! But, as I discovered very quickly, it doesn't work like that."

Threadless **(www.threadless.com)** is a T-shirt design competition where people are encouraged to submit their designs to be judged and scored by other visitors to the site. The ones that get the highest scores are then printed by the company. It was here that Emma found there was more to great T-shirt design than just bunging a design on the front. She says, "I entered a few designs on Threadless and quickly learnt that people won't accept that. It's a really good place to go and learn what the people who might buy your T-shirts like and dislike. It helped me understand that a lot more thought has to go into T-shirt design than just applying a character."

After finding out the hard way what she should do, Emma went on to design a whole series of T-shirts. Although simple, they do a great job of promoting her business brand identity, and also have enough attitude to get you admiring looks if you wear one to a cool bar or club. But at the moment you can't buy one. Emma explains, "I would dearly love to take my T-shirts into production, but I haven't got the money to invest in producing them yet! Although I'm working on it..."



And if there's one thing that'll stop you realising your dream of dominating the T-shirt world, it's money. Producing T-shirts on a grand scale is very expensive to begin with, but if you have smaller dreams, check out the CafePress.com site. Located at **www.cafepress.com**, this service lets you open up an online store and sell T-shirts, mugs, mousemats and other goods with your designs printed on them. CafePress deals with creating the store and handling the money, and there are no costs upfront.

You upload your designs and set your price over the CafePress base price, and then promote your new site. CafePress will manufacture the products, ship them worldwide and take care of customer support and the all-important processing of payments. Although it's a US site you're allowed to set up shop if you live in another country, but all payments are made in US$, so you'll have to deal with conversion fees.

There are plenty of ways to get your T-shirt design printed. Whether you make the occasional one for yourself, set up a CafePress store or get professionals in, once you have that perfect design, the rest is easy!

[writer: Mark Kendrick | hardware: Apple iMac G4 17" | software: Adobe Illustrator CS]

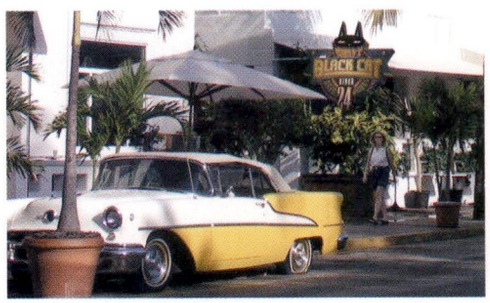
CREATE VECTOR RETRO ART

Adobe Illustrator CS is a powerhouse of vector art creativity. We put it to the test and challenge it to re-create the classic Americana signs from the Forties and Fifties

Perhaps the most overlooked arm of the Adobe Creative Suite is Adobe Illustrator CS. Its way of drawing graphics by working with vector coordinates rather than pixels has some designers and illustrators running for the pixellated safety of Photoshop every time, but Illustrator is a gem of a program that has had some significant upgrades in its elevation to CS level. And now with the vector look back in vogue thanks to Web animation done by Macromedia's Flash, Illustrator is a must-know package. So, what better way to connect with this terribly fashionable 'now' program than to give it the challenge of re-creating a cool design style of the past?

The graphic overstyling of American popular culture of the Forties and Fifties is nothing short of beautiful. In what was arguably its peak era of design, America's pop culture graphical styling gave the US a strong global identity and 'branding'. Coca Cola, drive-in movie theaters, diners and Cadillacs are prime examples of exciting visual styles that have influenced design and fashion culture ever since. Now, with influential illustrative designers such as Rian Hughes and Shane Glines taking aspects of this style into their work, retro Americana-influenced graphic design has never been more popular, or indeed well-suited, to test Adobe Illustrator.

With this in mind, we've taken up the challenge of creating a mid-Fifties American drive-in diner logo that, after completing this tutorial, will have you not only more proficient in Illustrator, but you'll be ordering a steak and shake at the local Be-Bop Deluxe before you know it! ■



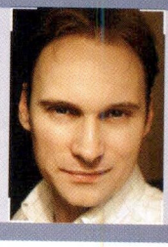
■ *This mock-up of our logo on a Miami street gives you the idea of what we are trying to achieve with this tutorial*

Edited using Warp
One new addition in Illustrator CS is a re-editable Transform tool, which allows all your different items to be warped to destruction

Text along a line
Creating text that runs along a curved line is a cinch in Illustrator CS. We show you how to achieve this within the tutorial

YOUR GUIDE

MARK KENDRICK is a freelance design consultant with over 18 years of corporate and magazine design experience. His credentials stretch back to the mid-Eighties, where his magazine work included legendary titles *Crash* and *Zzap! 64*. He has launched over 100 new magazines, including *iCreate*.



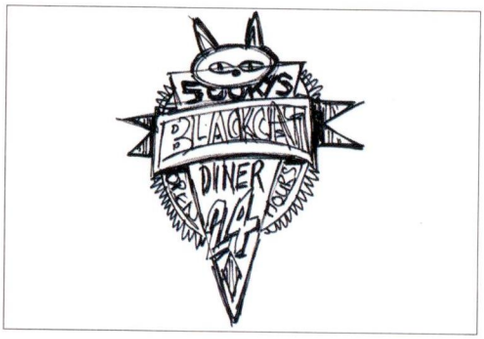
Colour enhanced with gradients
A neat finishing touch is to create graduated blends that you can assign to shapes to enhance the tone and give depth to an otherwise flat surface

3D Transform option
No matter how great your logo is, try taking it one stage further with the 3D function. As you can see, this really does add another dimension to your piece

■ *Created entirely in Adobe Illustrator, this Fifties American diner logo is a simple enough project to follow, but packs an important creative principle – that logo styling is an essential part of graphic design*

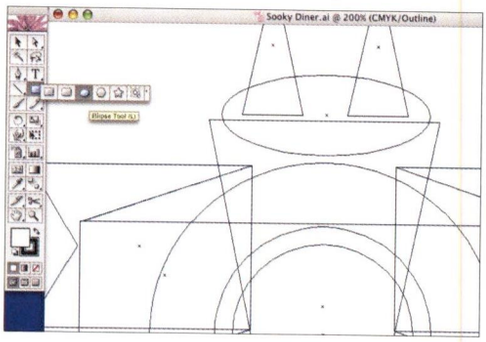
Step-by-step: drawing the sign

Crafting the basic logo shapes is child's play with Illustrator's drawing tools



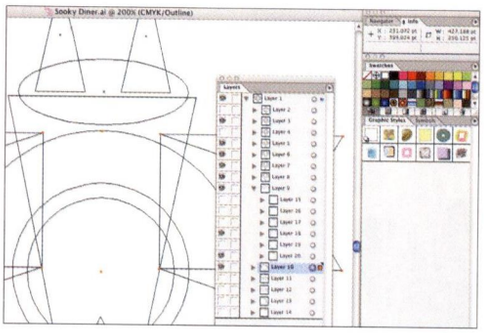
1: Plan your illustration

Start with a plan. It sounds obvious, but things can get tricky with Illustrator very quickly, so start with a clear sketch. Ours looks a little vague, but even this will give you an idea of what you are trying to achieve and provide a visual reference of the key items you want to include in your logo.



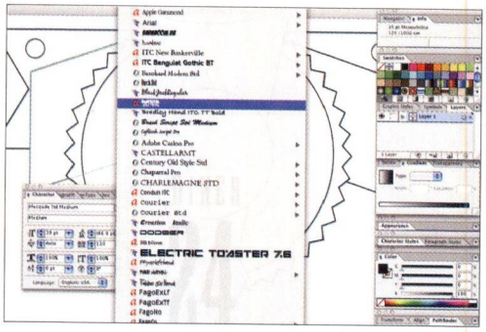
2: Start by drawing basic shapes

Assuming you know a little about Illustrator, start by drawing the key logo shapes using the Geometric Shapes Creator from the Toolkit palette. Don't worry too much about colour at this stage. In fact, we've decided to do all our logo creation initially in white with a black stroke for clarity.



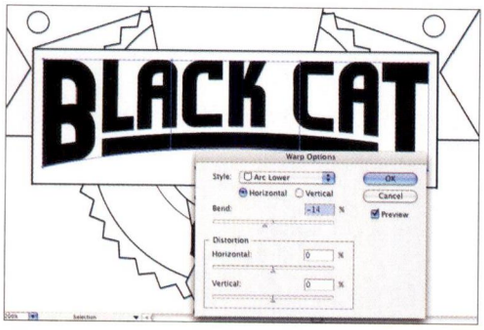
3: Planning by layers

Working from back to front is a no-nonsense way of drawing in Illustrator, so when creating your shapes use layers if you feel the need – in the Layers menu. This will keep shapes separate so you won't get into a mess later on and find it tough to access the relevant items when colouring up.



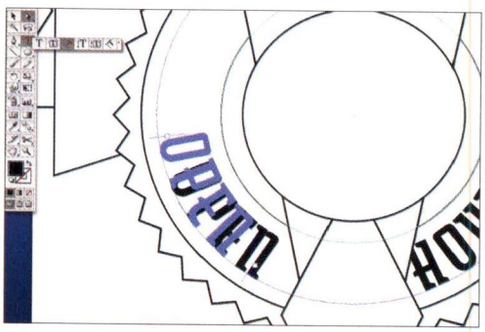
4: Choosing the right fonts

Going retro means careful consideration of the typography in your logo. Do your homework for what was in vogue in the Forties and Fifties, and choose a font that's functional but has flourishes associated with the hand-drawn extravagance of the era. We've chosen Airedale, Bomr and Mesquite.



5: Using the Warp factor

With basic shapes drawn, let's bend items using Warp. Select the text and objects to shape, and select Envelope Distort, Make With Warp. There are various settings here, but we've chosen the Top Arch option. Hit Preview to see your object bend. OK your options once happy with the preview results.



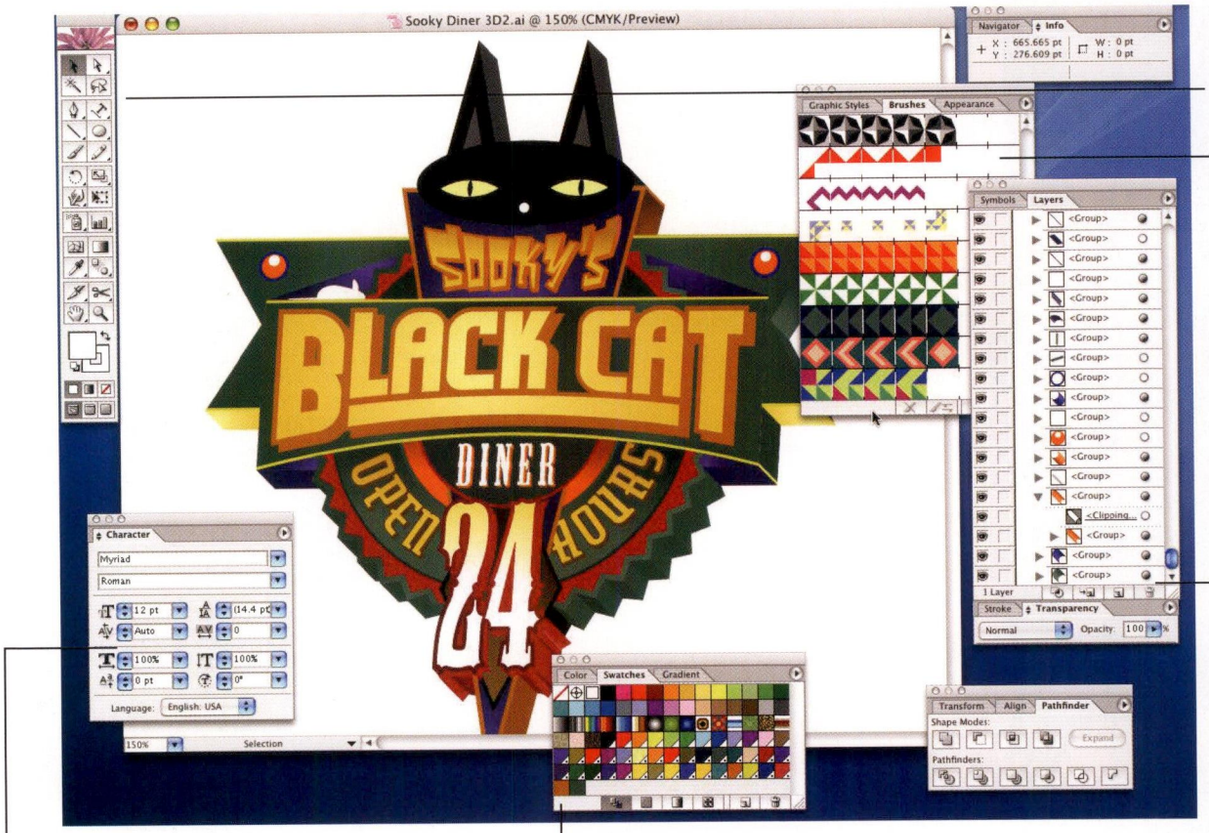
6: Type on a curved line

For our Open Hours text, first draw a circle, then select the Text tool and drag right to access the Type On A Path tool. Click on the circle and type in your text. Now use the Direct Select tool and click on the text's vertical line text guide. Drag this line around and the text will move inwards or outside the circle arch.

CREATE VECTOR RETRO ART

Your quick guide to the Illustrator CS work area used

The palettes and working environment of Adobe Illustrator CS are designed to feel comfortable and logical to the creative user. Photoshop and InDesign users will find this easy to get into right away



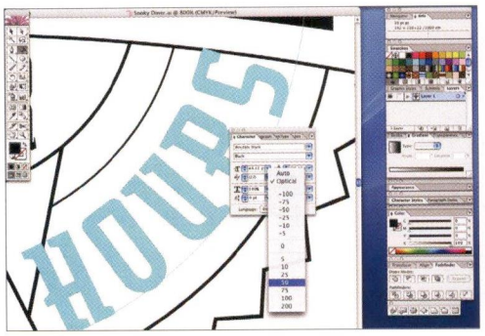
Toolbar tactics
Much like in Photoshop, all major drawing tools are here, and it will be essential to master the Pen tool

Brushes, Styles and Appearance
Saveable libraries of art styles can be kept here. Pen brushes, elaborate border styling or complete item characteristics are also stored in this palette

Type handling
Enhanced with CS, the type handling in Illustrator is now very similar to that of Photoshop and InDesign. Effective, powerful type controls are all here

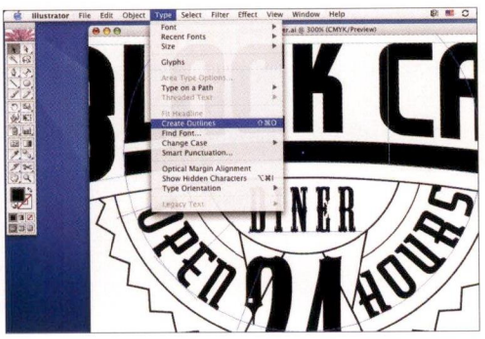
Colour swatches and gradients
Many colour methods are stored here, including RGB, Pantone and CMYK colour profiles. Plus, you can create your own swatches and gradients

Working with layers
Break up your images into layers to avoid confusion among all those vector points you'll create



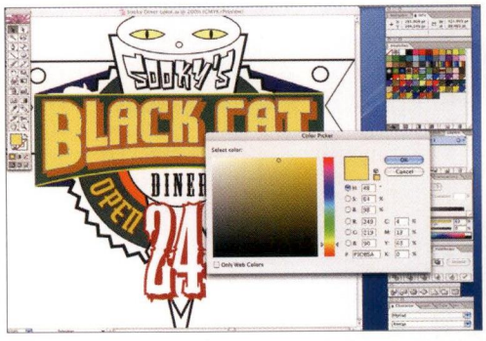
7: Kerning for strokes

Within our illustration there are coloured lines called 'strokes' around many items. With text in particular, the stroke needs to be accounted for by allowing a little more space than usual between each letterform. This space is called the 'Kern' amount. The space between lines of text is called the 'Leading' amount.



8: Convert to outlines

In order for text to be manipulated effectively, and for the illustration to be able to be output by any printer or bureau house, it's advisable to convert all text to outline graphics. That way you won't have to provide fonts as well as the Illustrator file. So highlight all text and select Type>Create Outlines.

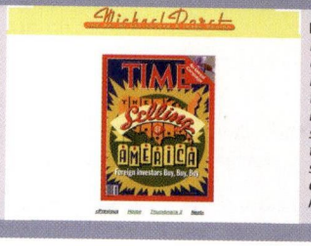


9: Start to embellish with colour

The logo has been drawn as a finished black-and-white graphic. Now it's time to add some colour. Use a sensitive colour palette, choosing muted, tertiary tones to emulate the stylised printing feel of the Fifties. Select each item and use the Swatches window as your first source of colour.

Do your homework first

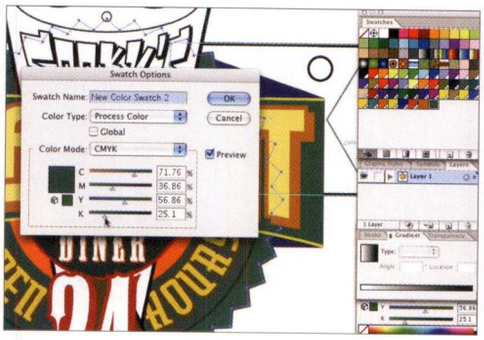
The trick to successful logo design, and especially retro graphic work, is to understand the genre you are trying to emulate. We've gone for the look synonymous with the late Forties to late Fifties, so we checked out various examples of retro signs before tackling our graphic. Look to other artists in the same design field too. We were influenced by the excellent work of Michael Doret in particular, whose retro work has been featured in, among others, *Time* magazine.



■ *You can't get better retro logo design anywhere in the world than that by Michael Doret. If you're serious about this type of art, you simply must check out Michael's work*

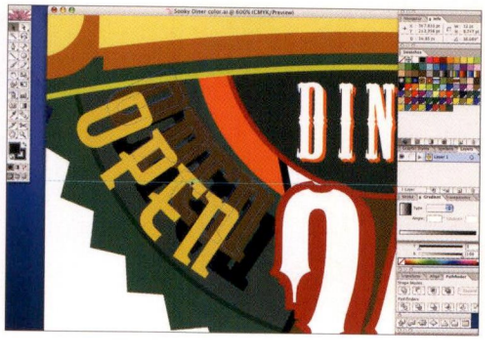
There are plenty of interesting destinations online that reveal more about this type of design, and these are but a few:

www.michaeldoret.com
www.misterretro.com
www.fontdiner.com
www.cartoonretro.com
www.logolounge.com
www.retroclipart.com



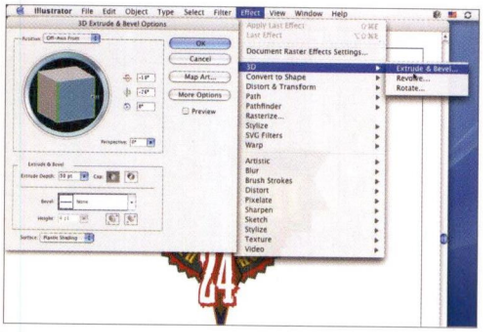
10: Editing swatches

The Swatches palette is where you edit, use and save any colours you create. For our illustration the preloaded standard swatches are too harsh, so we used these as a starting point only. You edit a swatch colour by double-clicking a swatch and moving the sliders until you're happy with the colour.



11: Strokes and fills

Our text has drop shadows, strokes and fills. To create these, first colour the text and apply a stroke in the same colour. Now duplicate this text and move it up and left of the original. Copy the duplicate, and place it directly on top of the second version. Colour this up differently and take off the stroke.

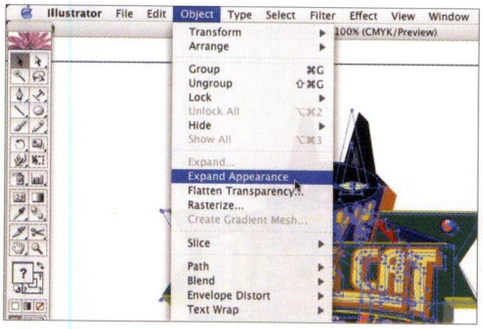


12: Adobe Dimensions revisited

Our graphic is pretty much finished now, but how about taking it one step further with a 3D effect? Illustrator CS has the old Adobe Dimensions program built in, and this works in the same way – except that any 3D rendering you do in Illustrator is totally customisable, just like the Effects palette in Photoshop.

13: Applying a 3D effect

First group your logo together as one item. Now go to Effect> 3D>Extrude & Bevel. This opens up a palette window that allows for various 3D effects to be applied to your image, along with lighting as well! We only wanted a subtle 3D effect, so went for a simple 15-degree movement on the image.



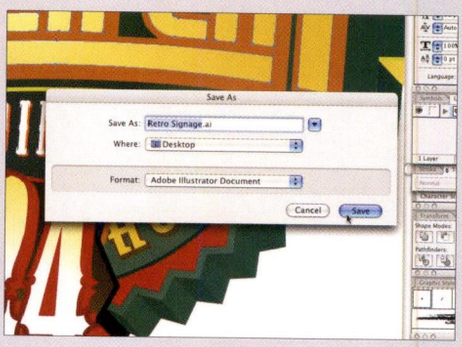
14: Expand Appearance

Once you're satisfied with your 3D appearance, apply the settings. You can go back and tweak this at any time by clicking on the Filter logo in Appearance. We want to add even more to our logo, so highlight your logo and choose Object, Expand Appearance.

15: Tonal details

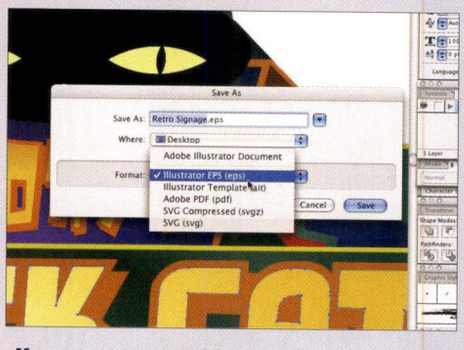
This will convert all that 3D work into editable, coloured polygon shapes. Using the Direct Select tool, we highlighted individual facets of the image and applied gradients to them to add a greater sense of depth to the 3D styling. See how rich this image is now? A stunning 3D, retro-inspired diner logo.

Saving illustrations



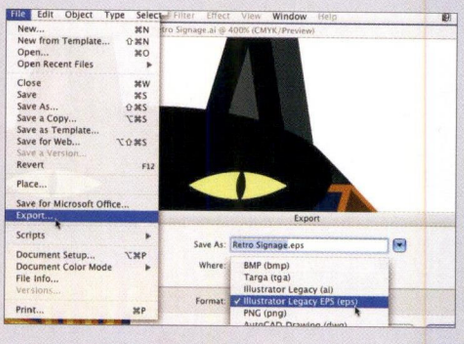
Saving to native file format

Adobe Illustrator graphics come in a very flexible format. There's a plethora of saving options for your art. Go to Save As and you'll be greeted by a myriad of options. If you plan to only access your logo in Illustrator CS, choose .ai file format, the native Illustrator format. But there are others...



Illustrator EPS file format

This is a generally accepted format of all Illustrator work. EPS files are, in the main, small files that are readable by all third-party graphics applications such as Photoshop, FreeHand, Flash, InDesign and even Quark XPress. But be careful in XPress – the preview image looks a bit naff.



Legacy file format

Need your graphic to be opened and edited by earlier versions of the program, such as the still popular Illustrator 8? Then you'll need to export the image as a Legacy file instead of saving your document. This will ensure your logo can be read by those running older versions.

[writer: **Steve Pick** | hardware: **Pentium PC** | software: **Illustrator**]

CREATE A GAMES CHARACTER

YOUR GUIDE

Steve Pick is a lead artist developing entertainment software in a variety of forms at Checkmate Solutions, working in the games industry for five whole years. Never leaving the comforting glow of a low-radiation monitor, you can check out his all-consuming pet animation project, Daisy Jones, at **www.daisyjones.co.uk**.

Not all vectors have to be Bezier-silky-smooth. Find out how to get a polygonal videogame look to your character designs

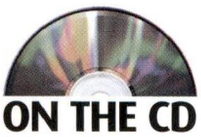
When I first started work in the wonderfully exciting (sometimes for the wrong reasons...) world of the games industry, I was lucky to have the opportunity to design characters for a rhythm-action dance game for the PSOne.

We had meetings outlining whether our robotic character should have a detachable rocket head, whether one of the female characters should be a holographic geisha with oversized headphones or a Giger-esque lizard woman... Meetings don't have to be boring by default in the world of work.

Sadly, the game was soon canned for being 'terrifyingly pants'. However, it does mean that the negative factor of the game never making it into the world can now be turned into a big fat positive, and along the way we can show you how to create your own Illustrator-wrangled cel-shaded videogame character without too much worry.

A lot of the techniques in this tutorial are very useful, and if you want to delve more into Illustrator as a full-time profession, you'll soon be using them as well. Sometimes without even thinking twice! But in addition to passing on some time-honoured techniques, we'll also be touching on a slightly different way of working. Typically people go for curvy edges to their characters, but when you enter the world of videogames, these curves are replaced by angles. It's quite interesting to experiment with this look, and you may take the concept into areas of other projects you're working on.

So put on some music, grab a cuppa and let's dive right in... ■



ON THE CD

background.ai
monkey.ai
background_finished.jpg
monkey_template.jpg

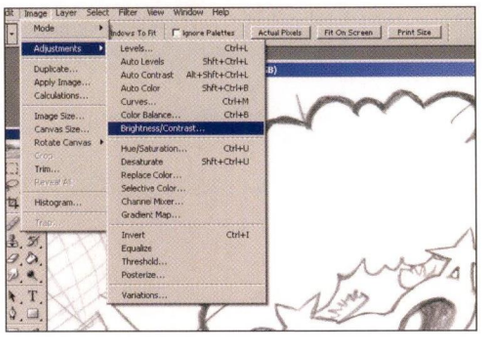
CREATE A GAMES CHARACTER

Step-by-step: create a lively disco monkey

Bring a vectorised image to life with Illustrator's versatile tools

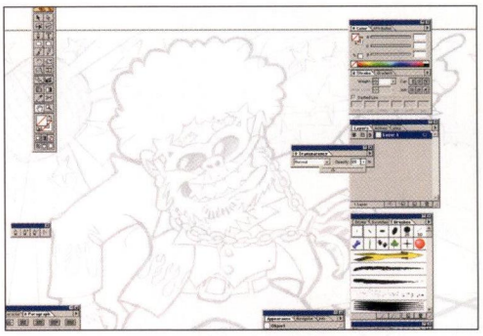
1: Sketchy beginnings...

Some people prefer to just use the computer to produce work, but there's nothing wrong with sketching something out first. This is what we've done in this tutorial – so import monkey-template.jpg from the cover CD. Note the character has none of the angular lines of the finished piece. That will come later!



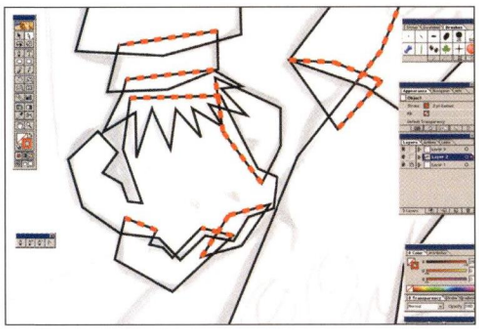
2: Slam and scan

If you decide to sketch your own monkey, put your work under the scanner and import it into Photoshop at 100-200dpi. Once in there, crop it and use Image>Adjustments> Brightness/Contrast to remove some of the rough edges. Save it as a medium quality JPG.



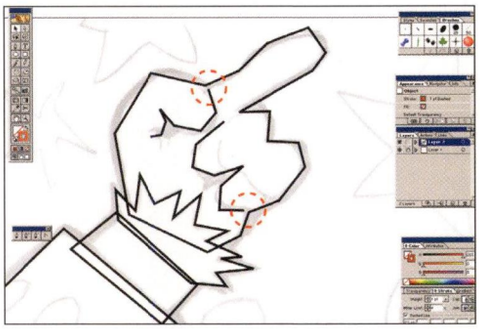
3: Setting up the template

Your next step is to warm up Illustrator and use File>Place in order to locate and put your template JPG onto your artboard. Reduce the Opacity to 25% using the Transparency window (Shift & F10) and then lock it into place using the Layers window.



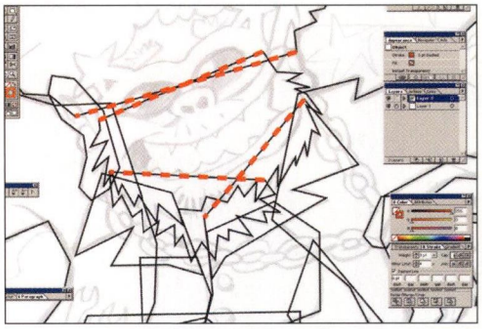
6: Overlap?

Yep, that's right, 'overlaps' is what we said – highlighted in red in the screenshot above. You won't see these in the finished piece because other filled shapes will effectively hide them. It also saves time instead of intricately working adjacent splines.



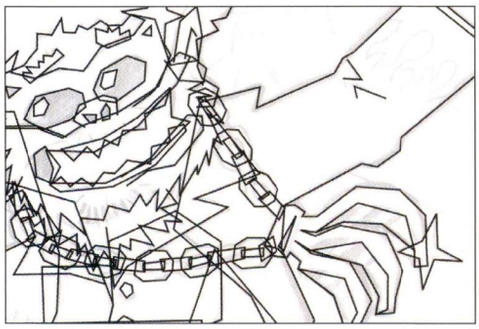
7: Those little details...

For the hand, we've had to use open splines for the thumb and fingers. Use the Direct Selection tool in order to grab the points on the open splines and then snap them to the nearest closed spline point. You can do this through the View>Snap To Point menu.



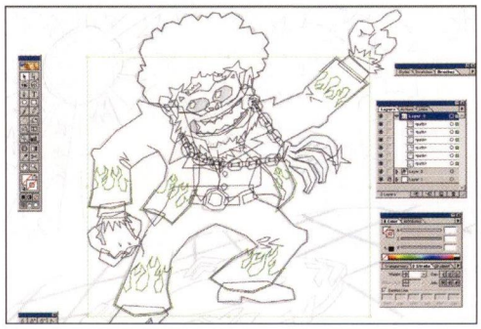
8: Overlaps schmoverlaps!

You may find that the face area will be getting a little cluttered. If so, once you have created a shape, use the Direct Selection tool in order to select a segment between points and then use the Delete/Backspace key to get rid of it.



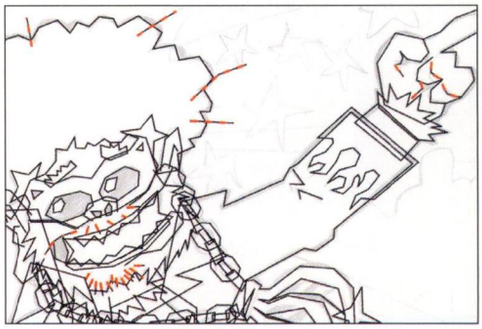
11: Rounding up loose ends

Once you have finished your chain, tidy up stray shapes such as the banana medallion and waistcoat by using the Direct Selection tool once again to snap to points. Finish off any open spline detailing (for example, the creases in his jacket).



12: Great cuffs of fire

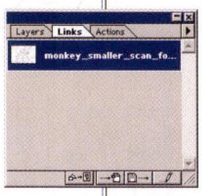
The suit's flame designs are an exception to snapping. Create a new layer and trace them, overlapping around borders of the sleeves and legs, closing the splines. Give them a little bit more detail than the other shapes on your character.



13: One more thing, sir...

Create a new layer over the three already created and add any details which won't be filled, for example the lines on his pointed finger, the afro hairs and his chinny beard. Snap to points where necessary. Congratulations – stage one is now complete!

Artwork placement in Illustrator is all about common sense. If you decide to import a 20Mb image in the background, you'll know about it, especially on slower machines. Before importing pictures, make sure you save them at a low compression – especially since they'll be guidelines anyway. The Links palette is great for replacing artwork on the fly. You can have a lower resolution image as a placeholder while working, before replacing the link with a higher one when you're done. Once your artwork covers the entire placed graphic template, you may as well delete it to speed things up.



The Links palette makes swapping and locating placed images easy

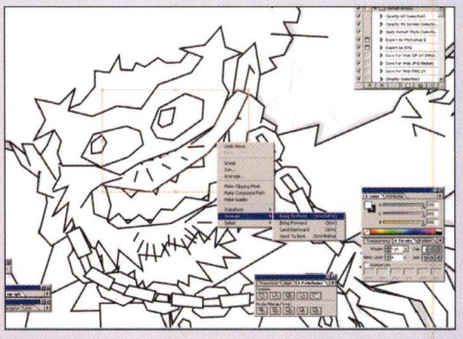
Order is important

4: ...and so it begins

Create a new layer over the locked Template layer, and using a 1pt black stroke with no fill, start to trace around the trousers with the Pen tool. Use as few clicks as possible to give a polygonal look. Click on the first point in order to close the shape.

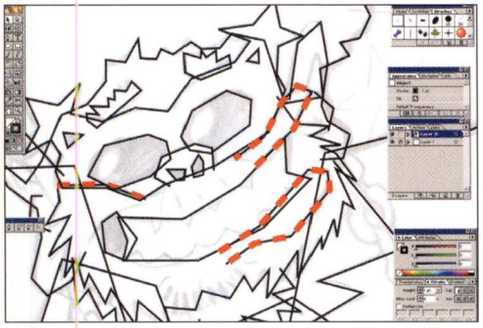
5: Keep doing what you're doing!

Now you simply need to keep right on with what you're doing, and continue with this technique on the other shapes of the character, sticking to only corner points (non-Bezier) and closing each shape. Note the 'overlap' on the trousers and the hand.



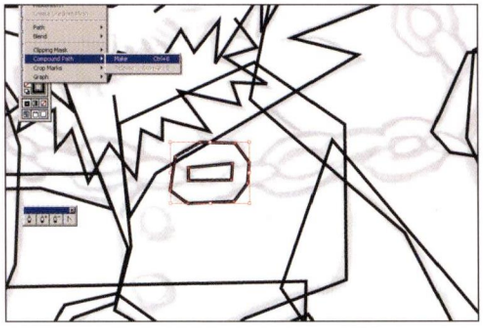
Just treat it like a puzzle

Sorting through spline order is a fundamental thing in Illustrator. You can send splines to either the front of the layer stack or the back. In this case, we've right-clicked the top lip and selected Arrange>Bring to Front. Use Bring Forward/Send Backward to fine tune.



9: The advantages of open splines

Now it's time to check out the highlighted open splines for the lips and the cheek. This is the easiest way to create them without being overly elaborate. The cheek will be used in the same way in order to cover up the edge of the sunglasses.



10: Medallion monkey

Trace the segment of a chain link, both outer and inner, then select both and go to Object>Compound Path>Make (Ctrl & 8). Alt-drag your new creation to clone it, and then rotate it (hover your cursor just outside the corner of the selection and drag) to form part of the chain.

A favourite Illustrator tip

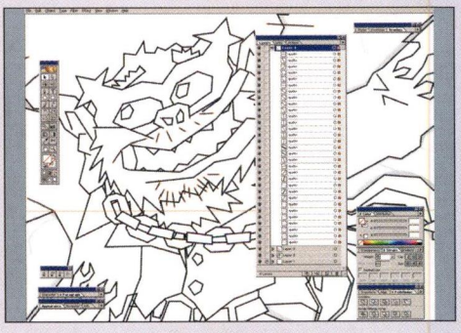
Ctrl & Y is gold – remember that shortcut. Use it often. It toggles Outline mode, and enables you to have X-ray vision. If you can't see a spline to select it, use Outline mode. Knowing this made our job 20 times easier! (Pass it on...)

14: Create a colouring book

To begin stage two, choose the second layer and give the selected shapes a white fill. It will now be easy to see which splines need to be in front and which need to be behind – have a look at the 'Order is important' boxout on the right

15: Adding a splash of colour

Once the order of splines has been worked out, you can start adding colour to shapes by simply selecting them and giving them a fill. Double-click on the Fill colour on the toolbox to choose your desired colour. Leave the flame designs alone for the moment.

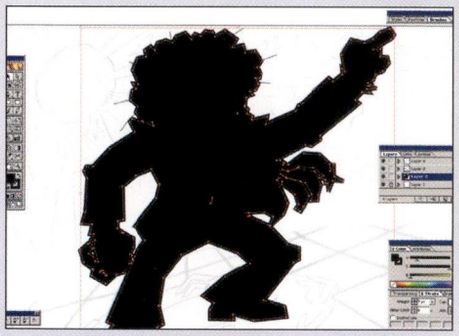


Layering discipline is key

It's good practice to layer your work. You will notice that all this layer arranging doesn't affect the layers above – so our monkey is still able to keep his beard. Also, it makes creating artwork much less bothersome to wade through.

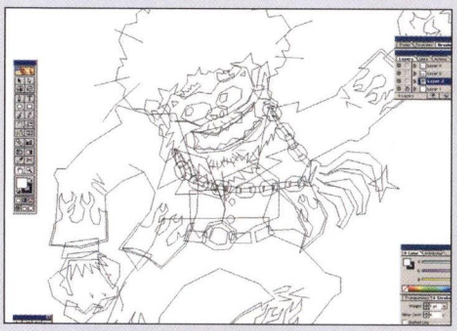
CREATE A GAMES CHARACTER

A bolder impression



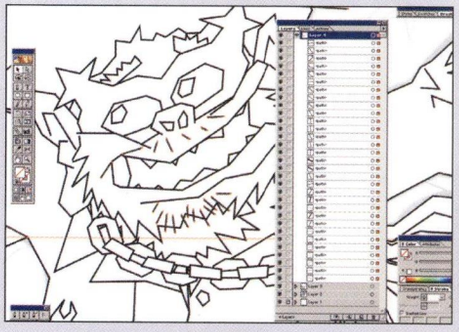
Wrangling a full-figure outline

Select everything in the coloured layer and nudge the whole selection to the right by one step, using the right cursor key while holding the Alt key to duplicate your selection. Now, in the Pathfinder window, select the Unite button.



Fill, Stroke, Send To Back

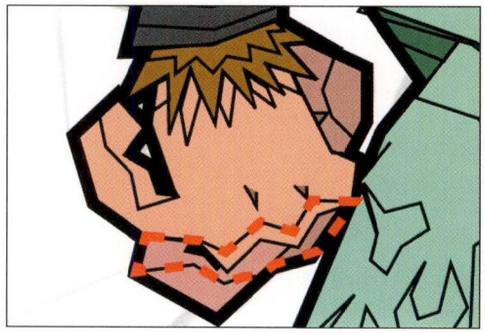
You now have a full-figure outline of your character. Give it a black fill and a hefty stroke (5-10pt) and right-click, then go to Arrange>Send to Back. Nudge the outline one step left to set it back into place. Create a new layer behind the Outline layer.



The easy way to shadow

Open up the Layers palette and drag the outline to the new layer. You can also create a shadow by cloning the outline, going to Object>Transform>Reflect Vertically, scaling the shape vertically and giving it a low opacity. Rotate anti-clockwise slightly to line it up properly.

Continued...



16: Light and shade

Now for some definition. Create a new layer below the Hairs layer, locking other layers to avoid affecting them. Zoom in and start drawing splines where you feel shadow would be. Note the background's main light source (glitterball). Don't be afraid to overlap some areas – note the shape of the knuckles.

17: Shadow casting

Select the layer contents and swap the black stroke with the fill. Globally, all shadows can have a 25% opacity, although we've gone in and given 50% opacity to shadows on the medallion, the lower lip and the bottom of the afro to add more depth.

18: Adding more depth

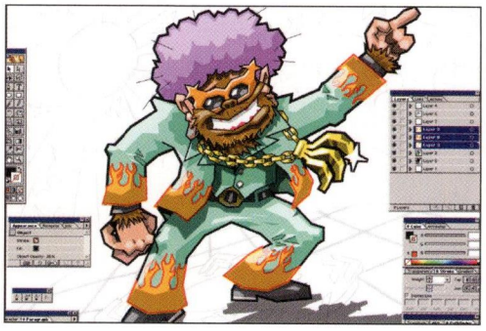
Unlock all layers and scrutinise your work. Snap any stray shadow points to tidy up, while selecting shapes and adding a weightier stroke to some (between 1.5pt to 2.5pt), as well as taking away strokes – such as his medallion, teeth and eyebrows. Also note the new beard colour!

19: Highlighting more depth

The next step is to lock all layers and then create a layer under your Shadow layer. Start tracing shapes where you think light will hit your character. Again, use the background's glitterball as a reference point, but don't be too strict with it.

20: Deja vu?

Do the same as you did in step 17, but this time make the fill colour white. Use different opacities to show the specular values on your character. We have skin tone as 50%, while the medallion has full 100% opacity because of its metallic quality.

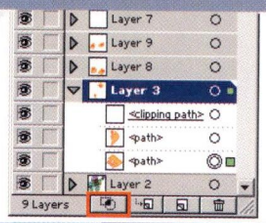


21: Flame on!

Colour those flames! Give them an orange fill and a thick red stroke. The next step is a little bit fiddly. Separate out the trouser flames into a new layer, as well as a new layer for the flames on the left jacket part. Now for the compound masking.

The joy of clipping paths

This tutorial uses clipping paths in order to achieve a masking effect. They are one of the easiest techniques to achieve in Illustrator, but also one of the most powerful. All you need to do is make sure you have a layer which contains the artwork you want masked, and a shape with no fill on top of the layer stack. Click on the Make/Release Clipping Mask button at the bottom of the Layers palette, and *voila*! Click the same button to return to normal. Don't forget you can still affect artwork in a clipping mask, so locking mask layers is very good practice.



■ *All it takes is one click – just one tiny click. On that button there...*

Anatomy of a disco monkey

All the little tricks used in creating this simian sexbomb at a glance...

Shadows

Shadows are very handy for increasing the depth of your character. Make use of more opaque shadows for objects which are closer to each other (such as the sunglasses near his face)

Flame details

Use clipping paths to hide any unsightly overlaps. Also, don't be restricted to black stroke colours

Stroke thickness

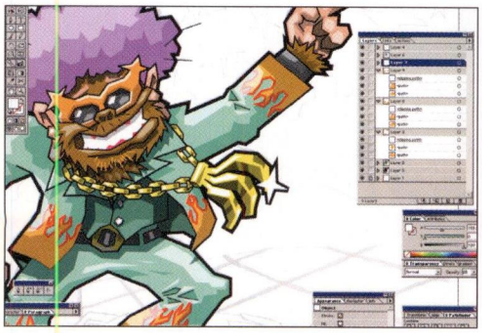
Don't just use a single point value for strokes; differing thicknesses give more form to your character

Lighter areas

Give different opacity values to your lighter shapes, depending on their real-world specular levels – the medallion has full opaque highlights

Those little details

Use filled open splines to add detailing to the creases in the clothing, adding shadows to them for even more detail



22: Make the compound masks

Grab the trousers shape and copy/paste it into the Trouser Flame layer. Make sure it's top of the layer stack, then snap it to the original trouser shape and click the Make Compound Mask button at the bottom of the Layers palette. Repeat for the other two layers.

23: Tidy up the compound masks

Select the Hairs layer and use the Pen tool to draw over the splines which the compound masks have gone over. While zoomed in, analyse your artwork and snap any stray points to underlying artwork. Also, feel free to add more shading or highlights to those relevant layers.

24: Replacing artwork

Finally, open up the Links palette (normally in the Layers palette) and select the template.jpg name. On the bottom of the palette, click the Replace Link button. Locate finishedbackground.jpg and select it. Congratulations! You've created your own vectorised character.

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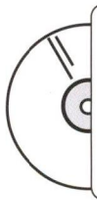

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Poor	■
Average	■■
Good	■■■
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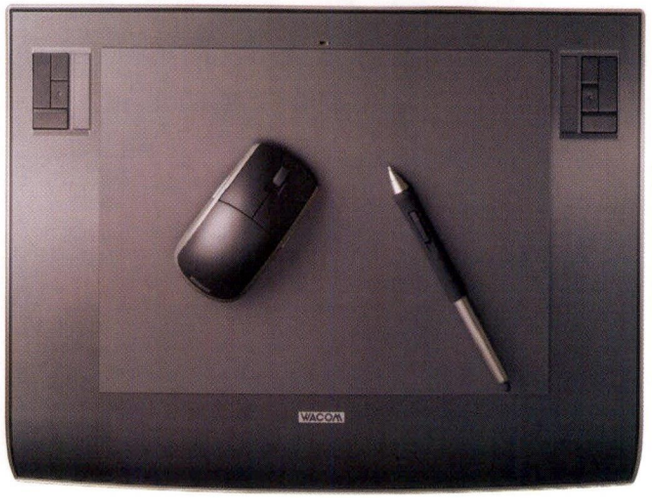
85.....Amacom DiViD burner

86.....Book reviews



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WACOM INTUOS3 A4 GRAPHICS TABLET

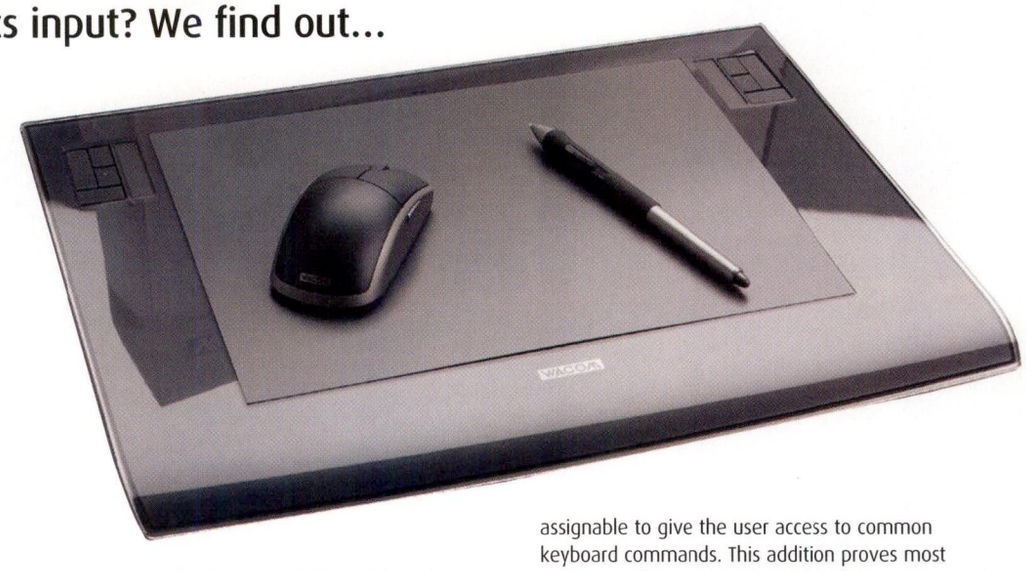
Wacom's tablet sports a host of new features, but does it mark a revolution in graphics input? We find out...

Since the release of the stunning Intuos2 range of graphics tablets, Wacom was been hard at work refining and upgrading its already prize design tool to raise the bar even higher. Take one look at the delicious Intuos3 and it's fair to say that, on many levels, the company has succeeded.

Once again, Wacom has brought out a range of models in order to suit a range of budgets and studio sizes. If you're short on desktop space, the small but useable A6 size will be perfect. Next up is the more substantial A5 model, which is sure to prove a favourite with the home user. Finally, for those with a bit more tabletop real estate and cash to spare, there's also A4, A4 Oversize and A3 sizes.

Here, we're looking at the standard A4 model, which is plenty large enough to satisfy the needs of most people. The benefit of a tablet this size is that the active area is big enough to ensure an artist can make use of tiny scribbles and broad brush strokes, which gives things a much more intuitive feel. Where users of smaller pads will have to forego the more dramatic pen swoops in favour of confined actions, a pad of these dimensions ensures that even the most expressive movements are reproduced accurately.

However, while the Intuos2 A4 pad offered the same sized active area, the Intuos3 sports a refined sensing system that has effectively doubled the sensitivity of the input plate, which now boasts a coordinate resolution of 5,080lpi (lines per inch). The upshot is that this pad is twice as precise as the Intuos2, which means that pen movements are tracked with even more sensitivity. In addition, it means less jitter and wobble that, in other tablets, proves a real pain when trying to position the pointer to apply intricate detail to an illustration.



assignable to give the user access to common keyboard commands. This addition proves most welcome when working in Adobe Illustrator or Corel Painter, because it allows users to effortlessly engage advanced tool commands without having to take their eyes off the screen and navigate the keyboard.

Also, each key panel is lined with a touch-sensitive finger bar, called the Touch Strip. This behaves in exactly the same way as the input pads found on laptop computers and PDAs, and enables the user to control things like the Photoshop Zoom function by simply drawing a finger along the pad. Onscreen movement can be a bit jerky at times, but it's still an impressive and thoughtful inclusion.

The tablet has undergone some important changes, and, true to form, Wacom has also upgraded the Grip Pen to enable users to take advantage of some

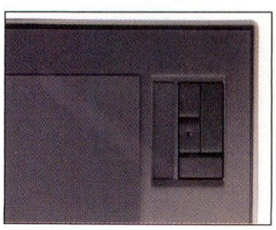
Specifications

Product:	Wacom Intuos3 A4 Graphics Tablet
URL:	www.wacom.com
Operating systems:	PC /Mac
Dimensions:	439.5 x 340 x 14 mm
Active area:	304.8 x 230.6 mm
Pressure sensitivity:	1,024
Coordinate resolution:	5,080lpi
Weight:	1,800g

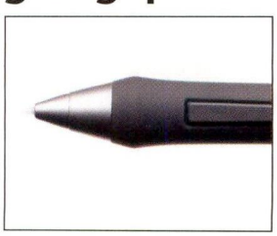
"This pad is twice as precise as the Intuos2, which means that pen movements are tracked with even more sensitivity"

Aesthetically, the Intuos3 tablet is quite different to the previous Intuos2 stylings. While the colour scheme is largely the same, the rather ugly hotlink bar that lined the top of the Intuos2 has been removed, replaced with a more useful and intuitive set of keys in the top-left and top-right corners. These are fully

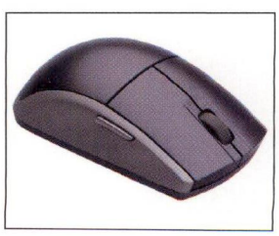
Feel the pressure – getting to grips with the Intuos3



An ExpressKeys panel acts as hotkeys for common keyboard commands. Found in either top corner of the tablet, it suits left and right-handed users



The Intuos3 Grip Pen comes complete with a selection of interchangeable nibs, which help make the illusion of working with real art materials much more convincing



The mouse has been redesigned from the model included with the Intuos2. It's now a bit smaller and fits more snugly in the hand, which is a definite bonus

A sweet tablet to swallow

Whatever way you dress it up, the Intuos3 is a mighty fine piece of kit

Keep the motor running
The tablet is powered from the USB, and all input devices can be used without batteries. This leaves users free to concentrate on their work, and not have to worry about running out of power

Touchy freely
The Touch Strip lines the ExpressKeys in both the left and right-hand corners of the pad. This enables users to control zoom and scroll functions within common graphics programs with a flick of a finger

Five star
The Intuos3 also comes complete with a mouse, which sports five buttons and a scroll wheel to cater for those everyday computing tasks

One-touch command
The ExpressKeys panel gives users access to the most important keyboard commands that enable advanced functions in programs such as Illustrator and Painter

Firm grip
The Intuos3 Grip Pen is ergonomically contoured and intuitive to use. A selection of interchangeable nibs makes for an even more convincing reproduction of traditional materials

Familiar feeling
The active pad is constructed from a material that simulates the subtle texture of paper, which means that artists who are used to working with traditional materials will be instantly at home

flexibility. Ergonomically, the design is fairly similar to the Intuos2 Grip Pen in that it sports the same rubberised, tapered barrel that prevents fingers from sliding down the shaft when increased pressure is applied. However, the rubberised grip has now been extended further up the barrel to give a firmer grasp.

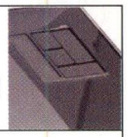
More for your money

The Grip Pen also comes with a range of additional tips to provide users with an even more realistic input device. First on this list is the Stroke Pen nib, which comes with a spring-loaded mid section designed to more accurately simulate the pressure obtained from a thick-nibbed paintbrush. Secondly, the replaceable Felt Pen nib more convincingly mimics the feel of a real felt-tipped pen being pressed down on paper. All these details add up to an impressive model.

How much this will impact on your work really depends on how much you value realism. There's no way that a graphics tablet can totally fool a user into believing they are working with traditional art materials, but those who are considering making the switch from traditional art to digital may find these extra nibs helpfully extend the illusion.

Wacom has made some useful and impressive improvements to the Intuos series, and these certainly add extra strength to a line of tablets that is already enjoying the view from the top of the pile. However, anyone who already owns an A4 Intuos2 pad will likely find that these additions are not a strong enough reason to shell out for the upgrade. The doubled tablet resolution is the most tempting new feature, but we've heard a few complaints from Intuos2 users in respect to poor input sensitivity. Having said that, if you want to own the best graphics tablet currently available, look no further than the Intuos3. ■

Verdict

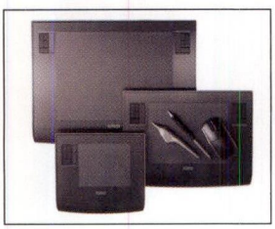


Product: Wacom Intuos3 A4 Graphics Tablet
Sales hotline: 0870 606 0325 [UK only]
Price: £430 [inc VAT]

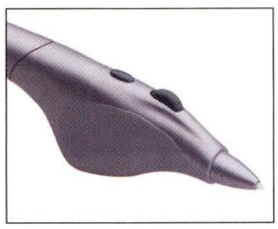
Ease of use:	■■■
Features:	■■■■
Quality of results:	■■■■■
Value for money:	■■■■

■ **What's good:** Double the resolution of the Intuos2, and the ExpressKeys panel is a real bonus
■ **What's bad:** Still not quite enough to tempt happy Intuos2 owners to make the upgrade

OVERALL 90%



■ *The tablet's active area has had its resolution doubled from that of previous models, and it now offers a whopping 5,080lpi for incredibly precise movement tracking*



■ *The Intuos3 Airbrush rounds off the set of input devices, and will find particular favour with artists who value the unique feel of this painting tool*

CASIO EXILIM EX-P600

Small, flexible and incredibly hardy, Casio's 6MP prosumer digicam promises all things to all people – but can it deliver? We take a closer look

Anyone who's ever come across one of Casio's EXILIM digital cameras will no doubt have been impressed by its quality. Casio has produced a line of feature-packed and well designed digicams, so when we received the unusual yet strangely attractive EX-P600, we were very interested.

The P600 marks a slight change of design direction for Casio, who's traditionally favoured more graceful stylings. Smooth curves and miniature features have been replaced with a bold and chunky aesthetic. The camera face is dominated by the 4x optical Canon zoom lens, above which is mounted an extended viewfinder housing and microphone. This protruding design gives a heavy-duty look, reinforced by the reassuringly solid stainless steel body casing. This camera means business. In fact, its durability makes it the ideal companion for shooting in the field.

That's not to say the P600 is a large camera; on the contrary, measuring in at just 98 x 68 x 45mm, it's slim and manageable. While just a little too large around the lens to fit snugly in a pocket, at 225g it's light enough to keep hold of or slip around the neck.

Speed demon

On the top, the shutter release is in the swivelling zoom switch – operated by the right-hand forefinger. The zoom moves in and out smoothly and is fast enough to make impromptu shots a breeze. The on/off button is next to the shutter release, and a quick press will fire the camera up in two seconds.

Moving to the back, the rest of the controls are positioned intuitively. At the top right, the Mode dial is slightly raised, so users can quickly choose from a range of shooting modes. The first position is a standard Automatic mode, which will delight amateur users wanting to take easy pics. But flicking onto BS mode and hitting Set brings up 25 preset shooting configurations that cover almost every condition. Among the line-up are the ever-useful Portrait, Scenery and Sports modes, plus the likes of Candlelight Portrait, Flower and Sundown to cater for tricky arrangements. The icing on the cake is the written description of what the mode is used for, which again makes it a top choice for people new to digicams.

Do it yourself

The P600 also supplies advanced manual settings in the shape of Aperture Priority and Shutter Priority modes. Used in conjunction with the responsive steel directional pad, a press of the left and right buttons is all that's needed to adjust the aperture size and shutter speed respectively. Other advanced controls include White Balance, ISO Speed, Auto Focus mode, Auto Focus area and Metering values. Advanced users will also be pleased with the detailed graphic display system, with its wealth of dials and animated instruments that can precisely configure a shot.

The 2-inch LCD screen provides a clear and bright image. Composition is a breeze and a fast refresh rate means moving images never get choppy. Image quality is also exemplary. Photos display exceptional detail, realistic colour tones and good saturation, and metering values are generally spot on.

We thoroughly recommend this camera to anyone wanting a robust, easy-to-use and flexible compact. With the P600, Casio has really hit the spot. ■

Specifications

Product:	Casio EXILIM EX-P600
URL:	www.casio.co.uk
Megapixels:	6.0
Max resolution:	2,816 x 2,112
Lens data:	f2.8 – 4.0 (33-132mm eq)
Zoom:	4x optical, 4x digital
ISO range:	50, 100, 200, 400
LCD monitor:	2 inches
Storage media:	9Mb internal, SD/MMC
Power:	Li-Ion rechargeable
Weight:	225g
Dimensions:	98 x 68 x 45 mm

■ *Rich colours and vibrant details produce particularly pleasing results, even when in Auto mode*

Verdict

Product: Casio EXILIM EX-P600
Sales hotline: 020 8208 9460 [UK only]
Price: £429 [inc VAT]

Ease of use:	■■■■
Features:	■■■■■
Quality of results:	■■■■■
Value for money:	■■■■■

■ **What's good:** Stunning build quality, easy for beginners and a great selection of features
■ **What's bad:** It's a bit slow to shut down, but that's not really a big deal

OVERALL 94%

The EX-P600 up close...

■ *Casio has loaded the EX-P600 with a quality Canon lens that copes extremely well with a wide range of photo compositions you'll encounter on your imaging travels*

■ *The auto focus system is both fast and intelligent. It manages to lock onto image subjects even when it's faced with tricky lighting and contrasting focus*

AMACOM DiViD BURNER

Boasting good looks and extreme flexibility, this external DVD writer drive seems to have all bases covered. We take a closer look...

Since the rise of the recordable CD introduced the concept of mass data storage on optical media, the humble 1.44Mb floppy disk has become obsolete. Nowadays, users are looking to regularly back up an incredibly large amount of data, most commonly in the shape of images, music and movies, and the demand for storage has become so powerful that even the CD-R is under threat.

Indeed, these are fast becoming the days of the recordable DVD, whose standard 4.7Gb of space easily thrashes the paltry 700Mb capacity of a CD-R. For digital video enthusiasts, writing data to DVD has become an essential practice, and although the price of the recordable discs is slightly higher, it's by far the most cost-effective method of storing media.

One of the greatest problems facing prospective DVD writer drives concerns the various different disc standards. There's DVD-R, DVD+R, DVD-RW and DVD+RW drives all jostling for attention on the shelves, so which is the best for you? Well, thanks to Amacom's latest release, the difference of media is not a problem.

Solid and dependable

Combining flexibility and practicality, the Amacom DiViD Burner external DVD writer drive is compatible with all of the above recordable DVD formats, in addition to the standard CD-R and CD-RW capabilities that are now standard in pretty much all DVD burner drives. There's no quoted support for the original DVD-RAM format, but since this is now all but obsolete, this shouldn't prove too much of a problem. In addition to the standard DVD disc size, the DiViD Burner is also capable of writing data to 9.4Gb double-sided discs, which is great for those looking to write entire movies to disc or back up existing illustration collections, without having to worry about the necessity to invoke nasty compression to fit things in at the expense of quality.

Those looking for an attractive external drive with which to decorate their desk will be entirely pleased with the DiViD's modern aesthetic. Encased in an extremely tough plastic and metal casing, there's little chance of damaging the unit on the move, and the combination of jet-black lines and shiny silver cross-sections are extremely easy on the eye.

On the front of the drive, a standard set of controls give users access to load/eject, track skip, volume settings and a headphone mini-jack, but spin the unit around and there's a host of connectivity options to suit all but the most cantankerous of computer setups.

Able to work with both FireWire and the new high-speed USB 2.0 standard, users can expect pleasing data transfer speeds to ensure copy and burn routines complete in a matter of minutes. In addition, the DiViD drive is fully plug-and-play compatible, which means there's no need to mess around installing a host of software drivers before the drive begins to function (unless, of course, you happen to be running Windows 98, in which case the included driver disc will be required). As an added bonus, all FireWire and USB cables are provided.

Up and running in no time, the DiViD drive offers 8x DVD recording speeds for both DVD-R and DVD+R, while slowing down to 4x speeds for DVD-RW and DVD+RW. Lastly, the standard CD-R recording speed is 32x. In addition to its high-speed connectivity, there is also a 2Mb buffer to ensure that writing errors are kept nicely at bay. What really seals the deal here is the excellent bundle of software that comes free in the DiViD package. Anyone that has an interest in digital video will find the inclusion of Pinnacle Studio 8 SE, 3-2-1 Studio's DVDXCopy Express and InterVideo's excellent WinDVD XP 4.0 very welcome indeed, and put the final touches on a complete and flexible DVD backup solution. ■

"What really seals the deal here is the excellent bundle of software that comes free in the DiViD package"

Specifications

Product:	Amacom DiViD Burner
URL	www.amacom-tech.com
Operating system:	**PC**
System requirements:	Windows 98SE or higher Pentium III 700MHz 128Mb RAM

Verdict

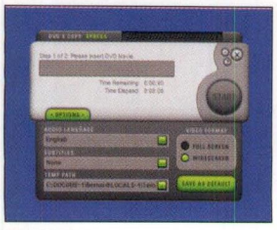
Product: Amacom DiViD Burner and Video Library
Sales hotline: 0845 1304445 [UK only]
Price: £199 [inc VAT]

Ease of use:	■■■■■
Features:	■■■■
Quality of results:	■■■■■
Value for money:	■■■■

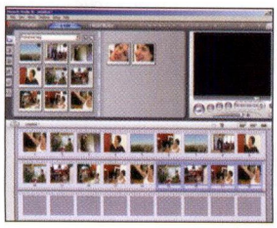
■ **What's good:** Excellent flexibility and a cinch to install. A great software bundle thrown in
■ **What's bad:** There are a few cheaper alternatives available out there

OVERALL 90%

Software included in the package...



■ *3-2-1 Studio's nippy DVDXCopy Xpress makes light work of backing up DVD movies, although due to a lawsuit it will not duplicate CSS copy-protected discs*



■ *Pinnacle's useful Studio 8 SE editing software offers users a basic but still quite usable movie-making tool, and is both flexible and very easy to use*

BOOK REVIEWS

Does one of these titles hold the key to Illustrator enlightenment? We put on our reading glasses and find out...

THE ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR CS WOW! BOOK
TIPS, TRICKS, AND TECHNIQUES FROM 100 TOP ILLUSTRATOR ARTISTS
INCLUDES MAC/WIN CD-ROM
• More than 80 art files from the book for you to deconstruct
• Demos and links for third-party programs and plug-ins that work with Illustrator CS
• Extra lessons, tips, and more!
WINNER of two Benjamin Franklin Awards for Best Computer Book!
SHARON STEUER
THE ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR CS WOW! BOOK

It's easy to read, it's full of information, it's good value for money – it has it all!

THE ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR CS WOW! BOOK

If first impressions really do count, this book is off to a flying start. It feels heavy, it comes with a CD-ROM, and a quick flick through its pages gives tantalising glimpses of colourful illustrations. Also, it quite literally has that 'wow' factor. Being big fans of the other 'Wow' series, we prayed to the god of design that this title would uphold the same values of providing easy-to-understand guidance to the ins and outs of Illustrator. And we're pleased to say that it did.

One of the main reasons why this book works so well is that it presents everything in a light, humorous way. Illustrator can be bloody tricky, so it helps to not have to wrestle with impenetrable instructions. Sharon Steuer has done an excellent job of getting the balance of fun and formality just right, so nothing ever feels like a chore. The book is arranged in chapters according to different aspects of Illustrator – things such as brushes, text, drawing, gradients and animation – so you can instantly jump to whatever area is causing you grief.

But if you're a first time user of Illustrator, we recommend you read from cover to cover. The early chapters cover all the basics you need, and there's even a chapter dedicated to 'The Zen of Illustrator', which will have you thinking like an Illustrator master in no time at all.

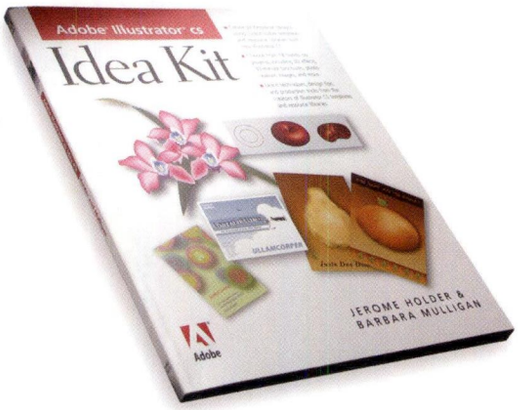
The CD-ROM is also excellent, and contains files from the book for you to examine, extra lessons and tips, plus demos of third-party programs. All in all, an indispensable reference guide.

Verdict

Product: The Adobe Illustrator CS WOW! Book
Author: Sharon Steuer
Price: £37.99 [inc VAT]
ISBN: 0-321-16892-5
Publisher: Peachpit Press/Adobe Press

- **What's good:** Detailed, professional and very, very colourful
- **What's bad:** Not that much, really. Even the paper it's printed on is nice!

OVERALL 92%



ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR CS IDEA KIT

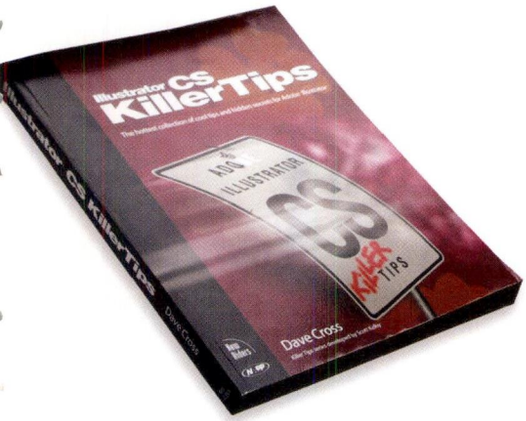
This is the smallest of the books reviewed – coming in at 132 pages – but it's still packed with ideas. Split up into 18 projects, its aim is to provide you with inspiration for setting Illustrator loose on a variety of tasks. There's no CD, so you will have to either copy the examples in the book or use your own materials, but it does rely on Illustrator's design templates, symbols and graphic styles, and you shouldn't come a cropper. The projects themselves are easy to understand – each one begins with a list of materials, kind of like a recipe, so you know what's in store, and they follow a simple step-by-step format, so you always know where you are. There are full colour illustrations throughout, and Jerome Holder and Barbara Mulligan make the text easy to understand. The only slight problem is that unless you read through a project, it's not clear what skills are being learnt. But this is a minor gripe.

Verdict

Product: Adobe Illustrator CS Idea Kit
Authors: Jerome Holder and Barbara Mulligan
Price: £14.99 [inc VAT]
ISBN: 0-321-20544-8
Publisher: Adobe Press

- **What's good:** Colourful illustrations, easy-to-follow projects, plenty of advice
- **What's bad:** A CD of sample images would have been helpful

OVERALL 80%



ILLUSTRATOR CS KILLER TIPS

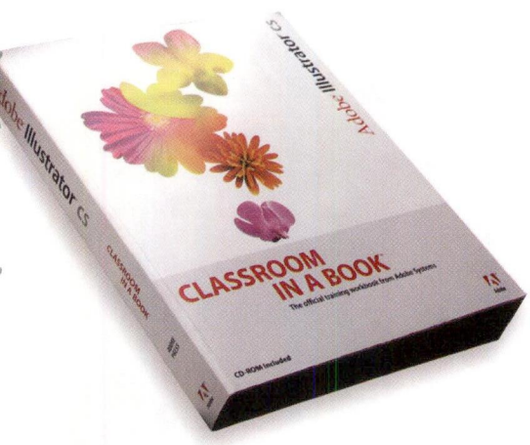
You may already be familiar with the *Killer Tips* series, in which case you'll be delighted to learn that this book serves up the same delicious plate of quality advice. If you're not, let us introduce you to the concept. *Killer Tips* are a collection of time-saving, hassle-avoiding tips that allow you to get your work done quickly and accurately. This obviously means that you have to have some knowledge of Illustrator, but even if you're a beginner the book is still worth buying, because it will get you into good habits sooner rather than later. The tips are organised into chapters, so if there's something specific you want, you kind of know where it is – but it's fun just to flick through this book. Each tip has at least one colour screenshot to show you what part of the menu or palette you need, or what the final effect will be, and the tips are exactly as they should be – concise, clear and informative.

Verdict

Product: Illustrator CS Killer Tips
Author: Dave Cross
Price: £22.99 [inc VAT]
ISBN: 0-321-27224-2
Publisher: New Riders

- **What's good:** Packed to the gills with sage advice for speeding up workflow
- **What's bad:** It can be a bit tricky to find something specific

OVERALL 90%



ILLUSTRATOR CS CLASSROOM IN A BOOK

This is one serious book. It's hefty, the text is business-like and there are precious few colour illustrations. In fact there are only 34. That's 34 colour illustrations in a book which is over 550 pages long. Obviously colour pictures would hike the price up, but if you're spending over £500 on a program, what's a few more pounds for a really quality book, especially since Adobe itself is responsible for this title? But what it lacks in pretty pictures, it makes up for in the amount of information presented. There are 19 lessons, which deal with pretty much every aspect of Illustrator CS. At the end of a project there are mini tests to see how much you've learnt, plus a review of what was covered, just in case you weren't paying attention. Everything you need is supplied on a CD-ROM, so you never feel high and dry, but the overall impression is just so unwelcoming. Which is a shame, because it offers excellent advice.

Verdict

Product: Adobe Illustrator CS Classroom in a Book
Author: Adobe Press
Price: £33.99 [inc VAT]
ISBN: 0-321-19380-6
Publisher: Adobe Press

- **What's good:** Masses of information, loads of great advice and tips
- **What's bad:** It's severely let down by the lack of freakin' colour pictures!

OVERALL 75%

FIND YOUR WAY IN ILLUSTRATOR

Feel like you're getting lost in a maze of menus and palettes? Our guide to the Illustrator interface will soon get you back on the right path

It goes without saying that any new program takes a little while to get used to, and Illustrator is no exception. If you're au fait with Photoshop, though, things will be a little easier, because key concepts such as layers, filters and selection tools will be instantly familiar.

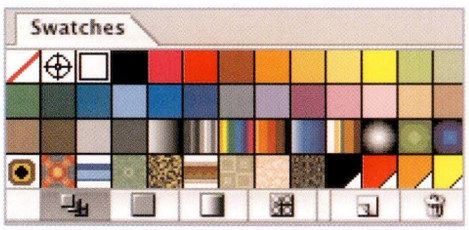
However, even if you are completely new to Illustrator, it still won't take long to get used to how it works. On these pages we explain the most common and important features of the Illustrator interface, as well as where they live. You'll notice that in our explanation of the toolbar, we've included a letter in a bracket. This is the shortcut key (Windows and Mac) for selecting that tool. Shortcuts will soon become your best friend and have you whizzing around the interface in no time at all.

The palettes

When you open Illustrator, a selection of palettes appears on the right of the interface. These let you make all sorts of enhancements to your illustrations, and we explain what each does below

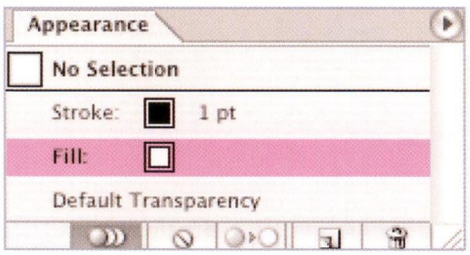
The Swatches palette

Use this to control the colours, gradients, patterns and tints in a document. When an object has a fill or stroke that contains a colour, gradient, pattern or tint from the Swatches palette, it's highlighted in the palette.



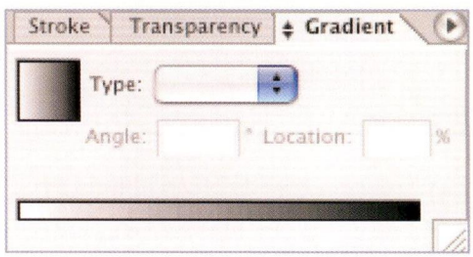
The Appearance palette

Once you start applying different settings and attributes to an object, you might really like the effect but have forgotten how you got it. The Appearance palette displays all the attributes of an object, so you can see what's been applied.



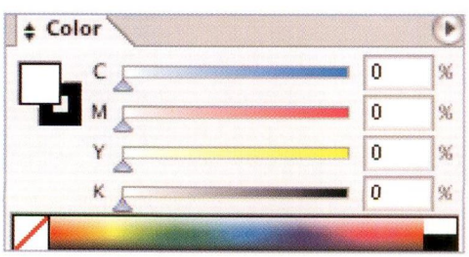
The Stroke, Transparency and Gradients palettes

You can alter the thickness (or 'weight') of a stroke from its palette. The Transparency palette allows you to control the opacity and blending modes of objects to get the exact effect you want. You can also create opacity masks from here. The Gradients palette lets you set the type of gradient to be used, as well as input an angle and location.



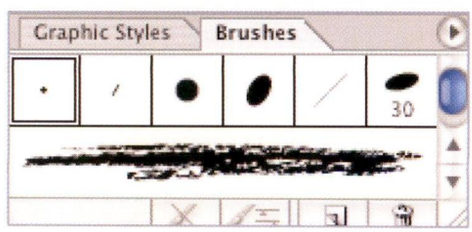
The Color palette

This palette is used to apply colour to an object's fill and stroke, but you can also edit and mix colours from here. If a small Alert triangle appears in the bottom left corner of the palette, the colour you have picked can't be printed in the format you're currently working in.



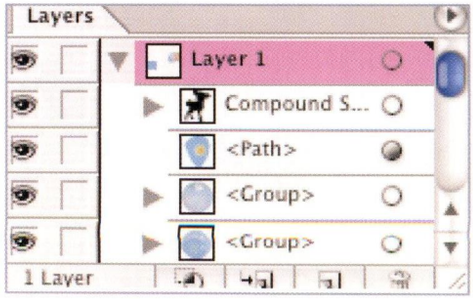
The Graphic Styles, Symbols and Brushes palettes

Graphic styles allow you to quickly alter the appearance of an object by applying a new style to it. Symbols allow you to add graphical elements to an illustration, while the Brushes palette lets you access the various default brushes supplied by Illustrator.



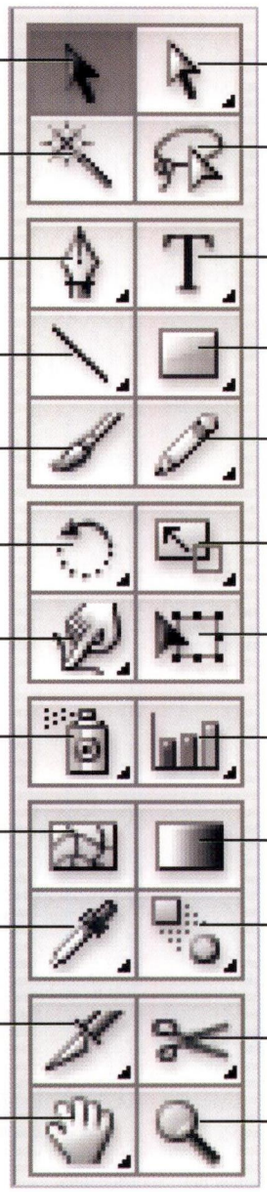
The Layers palette

Use this to organise the different elements of your artwork. Using a new layer will prevent any changes being made to the other layers, and changing the order of layers will determine what objects are at the front of the illustration.



The toolbar

You won't get anywhere without these suckers. Whether you're drawing objects, creating gradients or applying text, it's all done from here



Selection tool (V)
Select entire objects

Direct Selection tool (A)
Select path segments or points

Magic Wand (Y)
Select objects with similar attributes

Direct Selection Lasso (Q)
Select points or path segments within objects

Pen tool (P)
Draw straight and curved lines

Type tool (T)
Enter and edit type

Line Segment tool (\)
Draw individual straight lines

Default shapes (M)
Create a rectangle and other shapes

Paintbrush tool (B)
Draw freehand lines as well as art and patterns

Pencil tool (N)
Draw and edit freehand lines

Rotate tool (r)
Rotate objects around a fixed point

Scale tool (S)
Resize objects around a fixed point

Warp tool (Shift, R)
Mould objects according to movement of cursor

Free Transform tool (E)
Scale, rotate or skew a selection

Symbol Sprayer tool (Shift, S)
Add multiple symbols as a set

Column Graph tool (J)
Position columns

Mesh tool (U)
Create and edit meshes

Gradient tool (G)
Set the beginning, end and angle of gradients

Eyedropper tool (I)
Sample colour or type attributes from objects

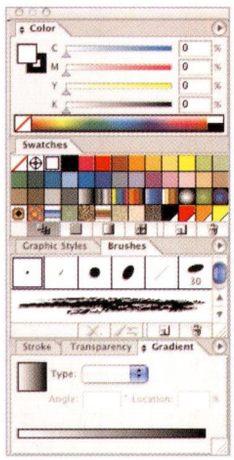
Blend tool (W)
Create objects blended between multiple objects

Slice tool (Shift, K)
Divide artwork into separate Web images

Scissors tool (C)
Cut paths at specific points

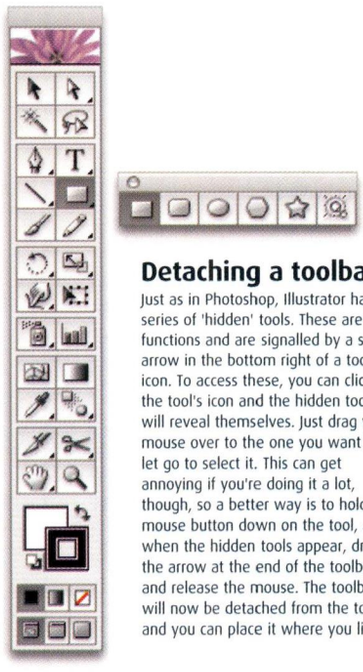
Hand tool (H)
Move artwork around the workspace

Zoom tool (Z)
Zoom in and out of an area



Playing with palettes

The various palettes in Illustrator are all arranged into logical groups according to their particular functions. So, for example, all the symbols, brushes and graphic styles are in the same group because they are all of a similar ilk. However, you can easily change how the palettes are set up by moving palettes into different groups, or detaching one so that it's on its own. To detach a palette, just click on its tab and then drag it onto the workspace. It will be all on its lonesome! To rearrange a group of palettes, click the tab of the palette you want to move and then drag and drop it into the group you think it should be with.



Detaching a toolbar

Just as in Photoshop, Illustrator has a series of 'hidden' tools. These are extra functions and are signalled by a small arrow in the bottom right of a tool's icon. To access these, you can click on the tool's icon and the hidden tools will reveal themselves. Just drag your mouse over to the one you want and let go to select it. This can get annoying if you're doing it a lot, though, so a better way is to hold the mouse button down on the tool, and when the hidden tools appear, drag to the arrow at the end of the toolbar and release the mouse. The toolbar will now be detached from the toolbox and you can place it where you like.

KNOWLEDGE BASE:

ILLUSTRATOR Q&A

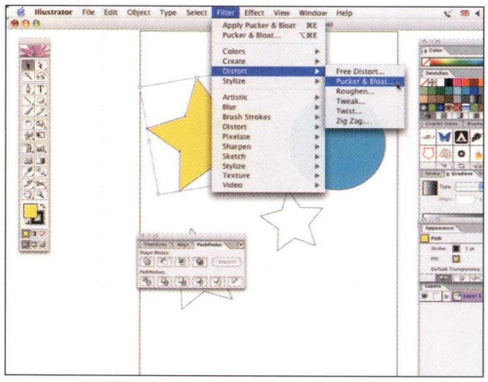
DON'T FEEL LIKE YOU'RE BEING CAST ADRIFT IN A VECTOR WASTELAND OF PROBLEMS – WE'RE HERE TO REIN YOU BACK IN

FUN IN THE SUN

Q I have created a sun-like shape made from applying the Pucker & Bloat effect to a star. I would like to minus this shape from a circle, but it doesn't seem to want to do it in the Pathfinder palette. Is this because it can't be done?

Claire Brown

A This can be done, but you are making one fatal mistake. When you create your original star polygon vector shape you need to apply the Pucker & Bloat as a filter, not an effect. An effect is temporary and can easily be removed, whereas the filter is a permanent change to the graphic, so the new shape becomes the actual vectors. Once you have applied the filter, it's just a case of placing your new Pucker & Bloat shape over the top of your circle and then selecting them both. In the Pathfinder palette, click on the Minus Shape option and then hit Expand to make the change a permanent knockout of the one graphic from the other.



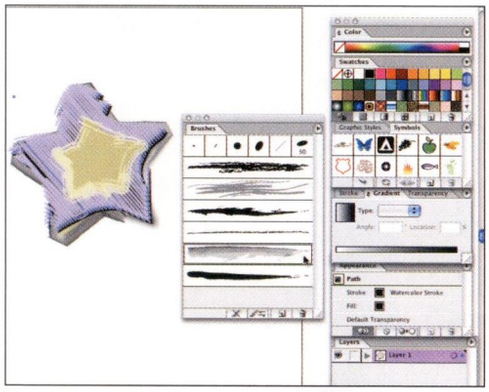
Think about what you want to do with an object and then decide if you need a filter or an effect

KEEP IT NATURAL

Q I recently bought a Wacom drawing tablet and wondered if there are any tools available in Illustrator that will allow me to create natural media effects like paint, ink, charcoal, etc. I've heard of Painter but I already have Illustrator CS and would like to use this if possible.

Martin Hurley

A Painter has really cornered the market for working with natural media, but Illustrator still has a bit to offer users when it comes to creating traditional art effects. You'll mainly get what you need by careful selection of different brushes and altering the settings to get a decent effect. In addition to old favourites such as watercolour (see Creative Primer) and ink, Illustrator CS also has its new Scribble graphic style that lets you get a crosshatched look. It takes a bit of practice to get the look exactly right, but it's still possible to give the impression of natural media.



With options for watercolour, ink and scribble, Illustrator CS is a viable option when it comes to getting the natural media look

MESSY STROKES

Q I have recently acquired Illustrator CS, and after a pretty steep learning curve am now starting to really enjoy the new features, especially the 3D capabilities. Unfortunately I am getting quite a messy stroked edge when using this effect. Is there any way around this?

Chris Leckie

A There is a solution, and although it's not perfect it's a lot better than the default stroke you get when you add the 3D effect. We also presume that you are adding complex bevelled edges, because this is when the problem is most noticeable.

First of all, remove the stroke from the object before you apply the 3D effect. Once the stroke is out of the way, you can go to the Effect menu and choose the Extrude and Bevel effect from the 3D option. Once this is applied, press Ctrl & C to copy the 3D graphic, and then press Ctrl & B to do a paste behind. No change is visible on the screen because your new graphic is directly behind the first.

With the pasted object still selected behind the first, hold down Shift, Ctrl & Alt and then drag out the corners to increase the size of the shape, so that it's bigger than the first. Now change the fill colour of the graphic behind to the colour of your stroke and you will have a more suitable outline.

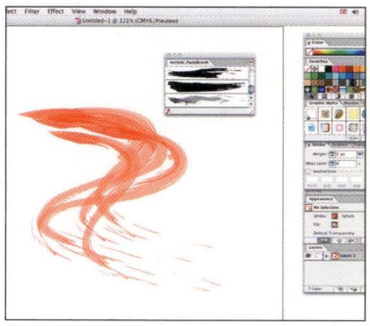
CREATIVEPRIMER

Brush up your illustration

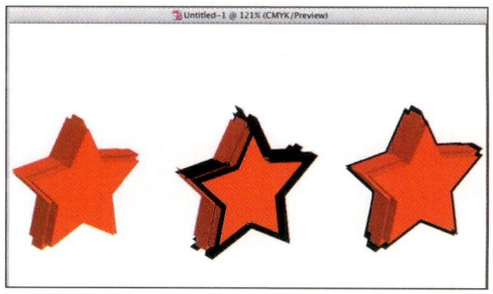
ILLUSTRATOR'S BRUSHES HOLD A WEALTH OF CREATIVE POSSIBILITY

If you've never experimented with the brushes in Illustrator, you have missed out on one of the most creative tools in the program. Clicking on the Window menu and choosing Paintbrushes can access the brushes.

Select the Paintbrush tool and then select one of the brushes from within the Paintbrush palette. Paint on the screen as if you were holding a paintbrush. Many of the brushes come with transparency effects, which are great for imitating watercolours.



Experiment with the brushes in Illustrator – you can even achieve a watercolour effect



With a bit of cunning and guile, it's possible to get around the problem of messy stroked edges

COMPOSITION HELP

Q I am a budding illustrator and am having trouble with the general composition of my illustrations, because I'm not exactly sure where I should place my graphics for the best results. Can you offer any help, or at least point me in the right direction?

Jodi Head

ILLUSTRATOR

A Composition is a difficult subject to tackle, because it differs from one illustration to another, so there are no hard and fast rules. There are many techniques that can help you out, though. One is to create areas of balance on your page so if you have an area with small graphics in a corner, you could balance this with a similar area in the opposite corner.

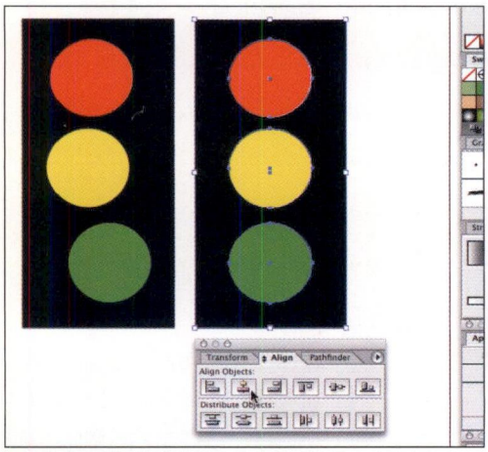
You can also create continuity in compositions by repeating graphics. This can be done with colour as well. Another way to get continuity is to have graphics in one area overlapping graphics in another so that your eye is taken through the composition. A similar technique to this is to place lines, maybe in the background, which are subtle and draw the eye through the illustration. If you are using typography in your illustration, try to position it so that it's linked with artwork, thus uniting the two. Hopefully these little pointers will help you, but also look at what other illustrators do.

KEEP THINGS IN LINE

Q I'm working on quite a complex illustration, and I have a row of circles that I want to line up exactly with one another. I've tried doing it by eye, but I always seem to end up with one that's not quite right. Is there a good way for me to do this?

Trent Summersby

A There certainly is, and it is blissfully simple. The Align palette allows you to select all the objects that need to be lined up, and then use one of them as the model of alignment. To do this, use the Selection tool to select all the objects that need to be lined up (hold down Shift as you click on them) and then click on the object that they need to be aligned to. Go to the Align palette (if it's not already open, go to the View menu and pick Align) and then click on one of the icons, depending on how you want the objects to line up. In the example below, we clicked on the Horizontal Align Center icon. Now all the selected objects will shuffle neatly so that they line up perfectly.



If you've got wonky lines, a swift blast of the Align palette will soon straighten up matters

CREATIVEPRIMER

Successful scanning

Scanning can be a very useful technique to aid all sorts of Illustrator projects, but sometimes the results require a bit of cleaning before they're used. Don't let this put you off though, because there are lots of ways to make your scan clean and pristine. It will involve a trip to Photoshop, but that's no headache.

Even if you're resigned to the fact that you're going to have to do a bit of tidying up in Photoshop, it's obviously still a good idea to try and do all you can to create the very best scan possible. The good news is that the cheapest of scanners can still produce a reasonably good image, so there's no excuse. Once you've got the image into Photoshop, zoom in to the troublesome areas and start to take action. Basic colour correction is usually the norm when scanning, especially if the image is a few years old. Accessing the Levels and Brightness/Contrast options from under the Image>Adjustments menu will soon sort this out. If you find that individual colours need adjusting in your scan, the Selective Color option – again from the Image>Adjustments menu – will allow you to isolate individual colours and correct them.

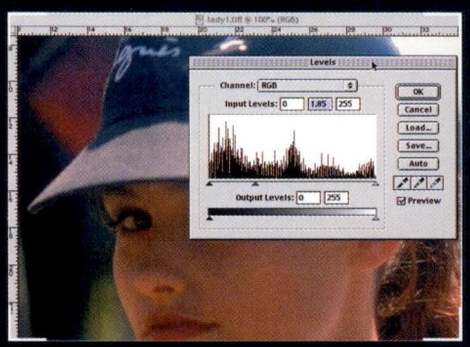
Once the basic colour correction is out of the way, you will need to isolate marks on the scanner bed, and also imperfections in the photo. And if you have a particularly old photo there may well be scratches or even tears in the image. The ever-handy Clone tool will help touch up these areas. Don't be tempted to use the Remove Dust and Scratches filter, however, because this will remove detail in your image. The Healing tool, by contrast, is invaluable, because it will use the colour of the surrounding pixels to fill in the area.

1: Add the scanner

Make sure you connect the scanner up, usually via your computer's USB or FireWire connection and then install any scanning software. Start Photoshop, and from the File menu go to the Import option. You should see an option for the scanning software you've installed.

2: Obtain the scan

There are usually minor colour correction options available in the bundled scanning software, but it's best to leave this to Photoshop and just concentrate on getting an evenly toned scan. Import the image at 300dpi to get a good-sized file; you can always scale it down later.



3: Colour correct

From the Image menu, select Adjustments. This will allow you to change the levels, the brightness and the contrast. With a combination of the Hue/Saturation and Selective Color features, you can correct the colour of the photo to resemble that of the original.

4: Remove dust and scratches

Zoom in to 200% and examine your image for scanning imperfections. Use the Clone Stamp tool to Alt-click and sample a similar area to clone it with. Alternatively, use the Healing tool because this just requires a similar texture sample, leaving Photoshop to add the colour.

Next issue Digital CreativeArts Special Edition...

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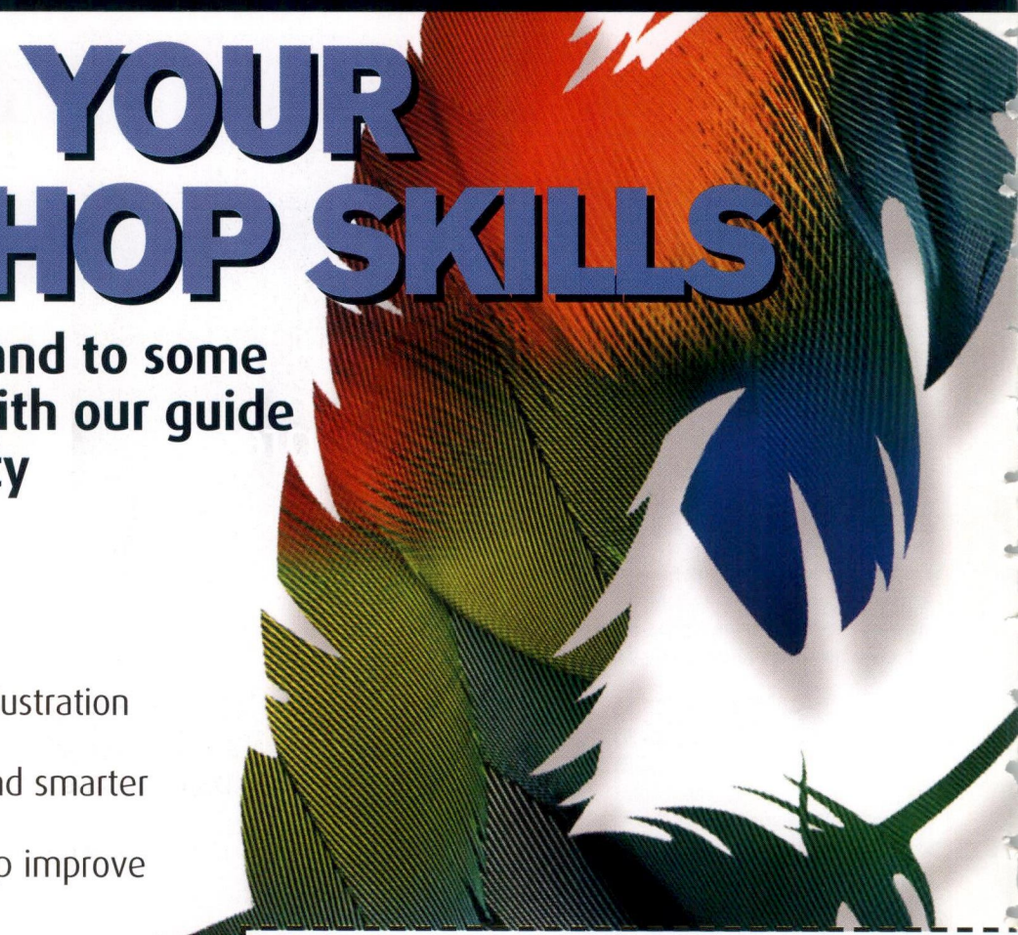

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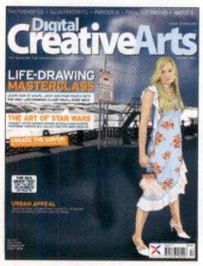

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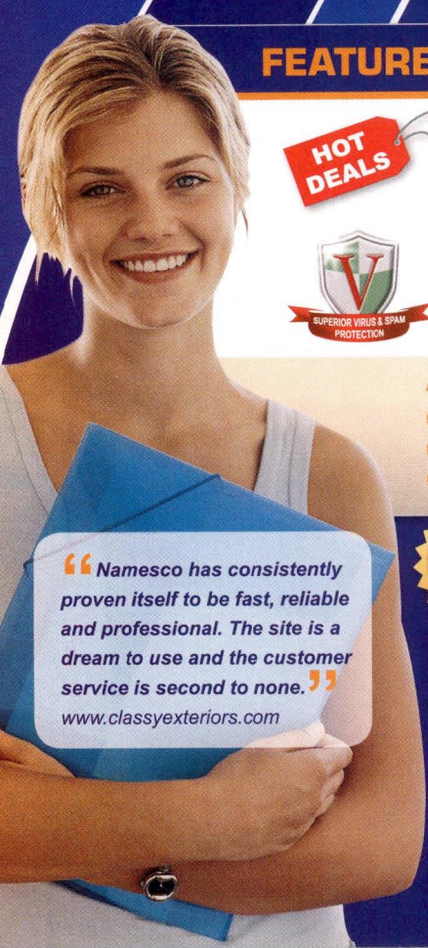

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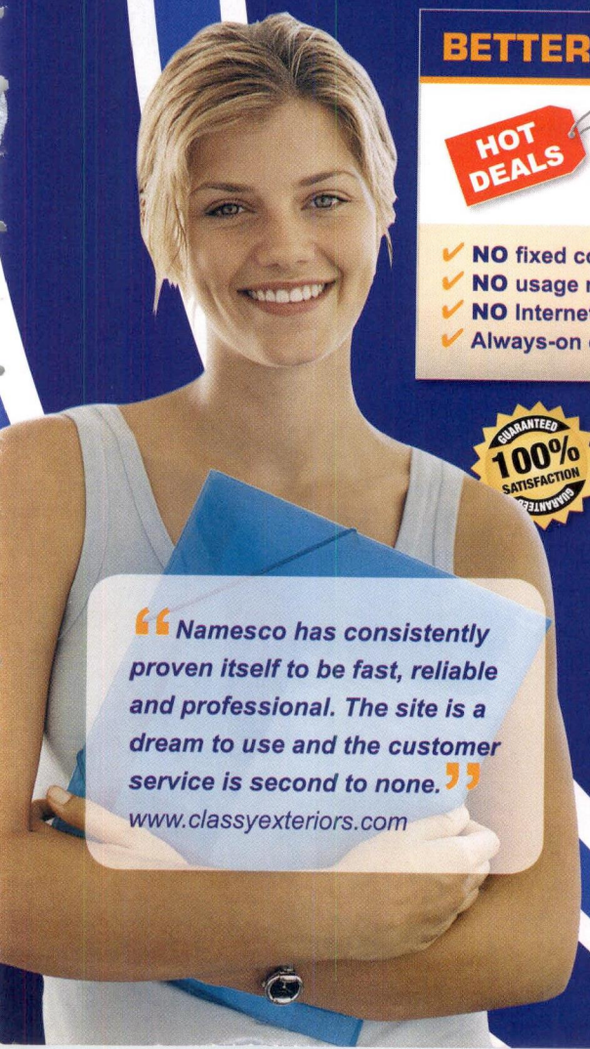
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How to use your free CD

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This link provides details about how to get technical support for your disc

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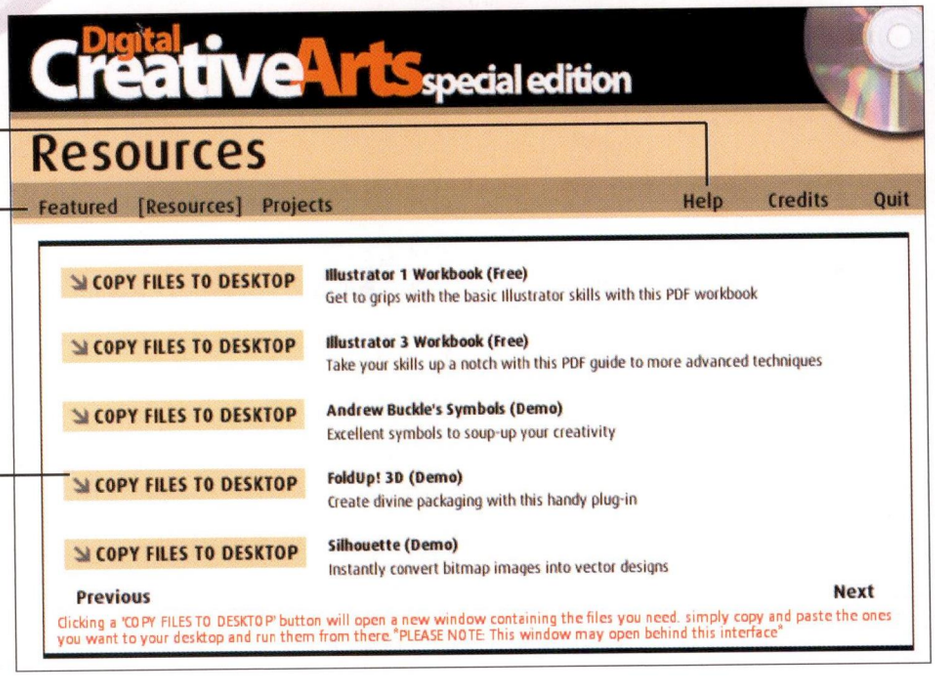
The main software in each category will appear in this window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Experiencing difficulty with your CD? Don't worry, our multimedia team can help

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GETTING HELP BY TELEPHONE

Digital Creative Arts Special Edition operates a limited telephone support service. Our CD helpline is open every Wednesday between 2pm and 6pm only. Call **01202 200259** for assistance.

Digital Creative Arts Special Edition project files

All the files you need to follow our expert Illustrator projects have been included on your jam-packed CD:

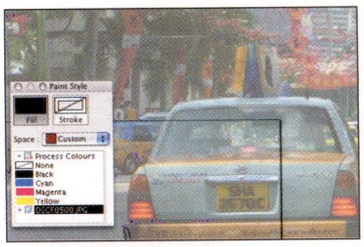
14-21 Create the cover
32-37 3D effects
38-41 Work with chrome
42-45 Gradients
46-49 Movie poster
50-55 Using default shapes
58-63 Illustrate a background
74-79 Games character

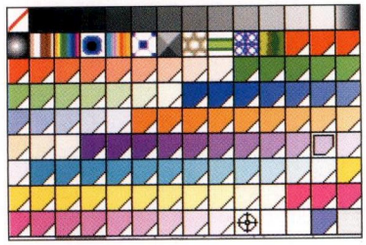
Illustrator toolkit

Use this stockpile of Illustrator resources to improve your work

We've got a bumper crop of Illustrator extras for you this issue, all of which will extend what you can do in this already excellent program. For starters, we have two brilliant plug-ins from HotDoor (**www.hotdoor.com**). CADtools 3 helps you draw 2D and isometric drawings. The six top-level tools let you perfect your skills by teaching you fundamental principles such as perspective. Our second HotDoor offering is MultiPage 1 (Illustrator 10) and 2 (CS). This plug-in lets you work on and print multiple page documents – a notoriously difficult area in Illustrator.

Keeping with the plug-in theme, we also have a demo of FoldUp! 3D from Comnet (**www.comnet-network.co.jp**). This allows you to quickly and easily design and print packaging – great for presenting a portfolio. You'll also find a demo of Silhouette. This program from Freesoft (**www.silhouetteonline.com**) is for converting bitmap images into vector outlines. Steve Kurth from Illustrator Answers has also supplied us with styles, swatches and brushes for Illustrator 10, which includes calligraphy brushes and patterns that can be used for borders.





Symbols collection

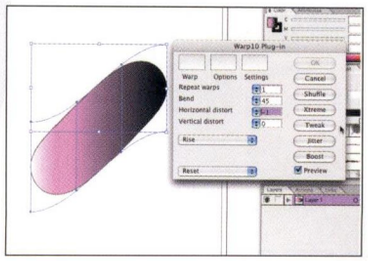
Enjoy over 200 symbols to get creative with

They may seem simple, but symbols frequently make excellent background elements, saving you valuable time. Symbols are also often handy for adding just that little bit extra to an illustration, and all it takes is for you to drag them onto the artboard. We've got a bumper crop of symbols this issue, including the beautiful heart and star selection from Andrew Buckle (**www.graphicxtras.com**) and an excellent collection from the Integration and Application Network. These cover all sorts of wildlife and flower designs, and even come with an interactive tutorial to get you started. We've included just a sample here, but the full collection has over 1,500 to choose from, and you can find out more at **http://ian.umces.edu/**.

Graphicxtras.com plug-ins

Add all sorts of strange effects to your objects

If you enjoyed the symbols kindly donated by Andrew Buckle form the graphicxtras.com Web site, you should definitely have a look at his plug-ins. These demos from various collections allow you to warp, shape, mesh and create spirals with just a few simple clicks of the mouse. Whether you just want to play around to see what you can come up with, or have a specific end in mind, these are lots of fun. We particularly liked the Warp plug-in, especially the Random Warp option, which allows you to quickly create a variety of shapes. Try out the demos and then find out more from **www.graphicxtras.com**.



Vector programs

Enjoy other vector treats with these programs

Illustrator isn't the only vector program on the block, as these two show. For starters, there's a Moho (**www.lostmarble.com**). This 2D vector-drawing program allows you to turn your illustrations into animations. Working on both Macs and PCs, you can use the demo to try your hand at creating vector drawings that can be played on a timeline and turned into animations. The demo is fully-featured, but please note that exported animations will have a watermark and exported Flash animations appear in greyscale. PC users can also try the demo of Photo Vector (**www.algolab.com/Photovector.htm**). As the name suggests, this allows you to swiftly convert photos into vector outline.

Illustrator tuition

Improve your Illustrator savvy with these utilities

It's very hard to know too much about a subject, and even if you think you have a good working knowledge of Illustrator, there are always new methods of working or faster ways of doing things. To help you get more from Illustrator, we have two PDF workbooks courtesy of Steve Kurth from Illustrator Answers (**www.illustratoranswers.com**). Steve used these workbooks on one of his teaching courses, and they are packed with explanations and examples of vital Illustrator techniques. But if you prefer a more visual feel to your learning, we also have a clip from Total Training (**www.totaltraining.com**). Discover the ins and outs of the Symbol Sprayer tool and start to use it in your work.

Technical specs

Important information

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Loading the CD

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

Screen resolution of 1,024 X 768 or higher.
Preferably with Macromedia Flash Player 5 or higher, Internet Explorer installed.
The CD-ROM interface should autorun once entered into your CD Drive, however, if it does not please follow the instructions below.

1. Double-click 'My Computer'
2. Right-click on your relevant CD drive and select 'Open' from the drop-down list.
3. Read the readme.txt if present to find out which file you need to launch to run the interface. Note this file is normally 'Start.exe', but there may be exceptions.

If you have problems running the interface, all of the contents are available on the disc and can be reached by following the method above and opening the relevant folders (ie Software folder for all of the software).

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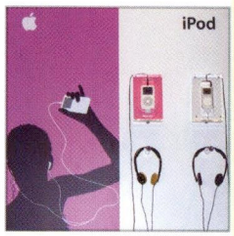

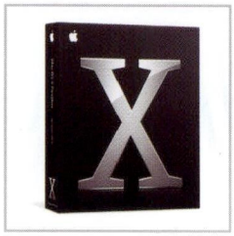

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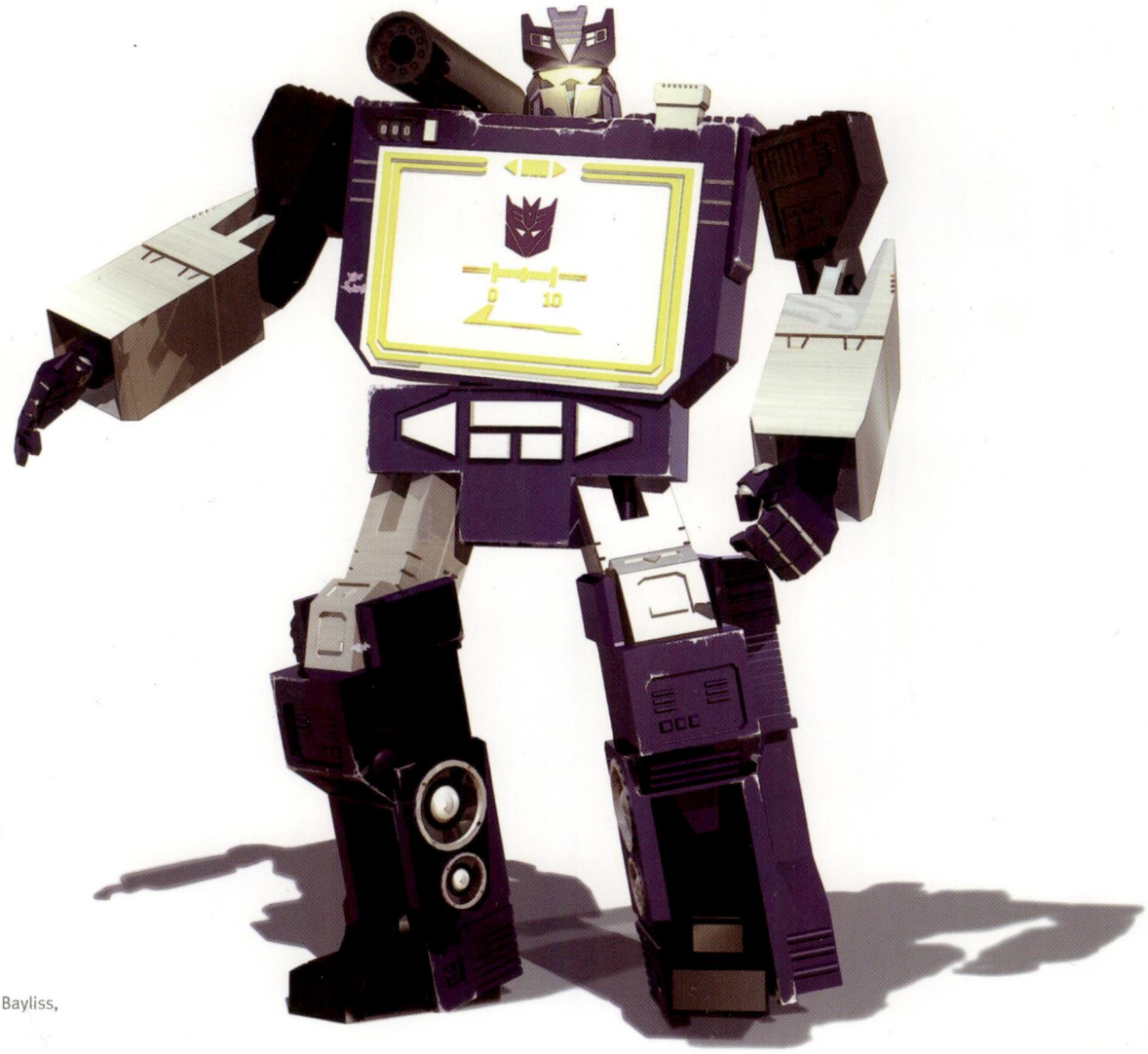

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3D Artist and Escape Graduate.

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